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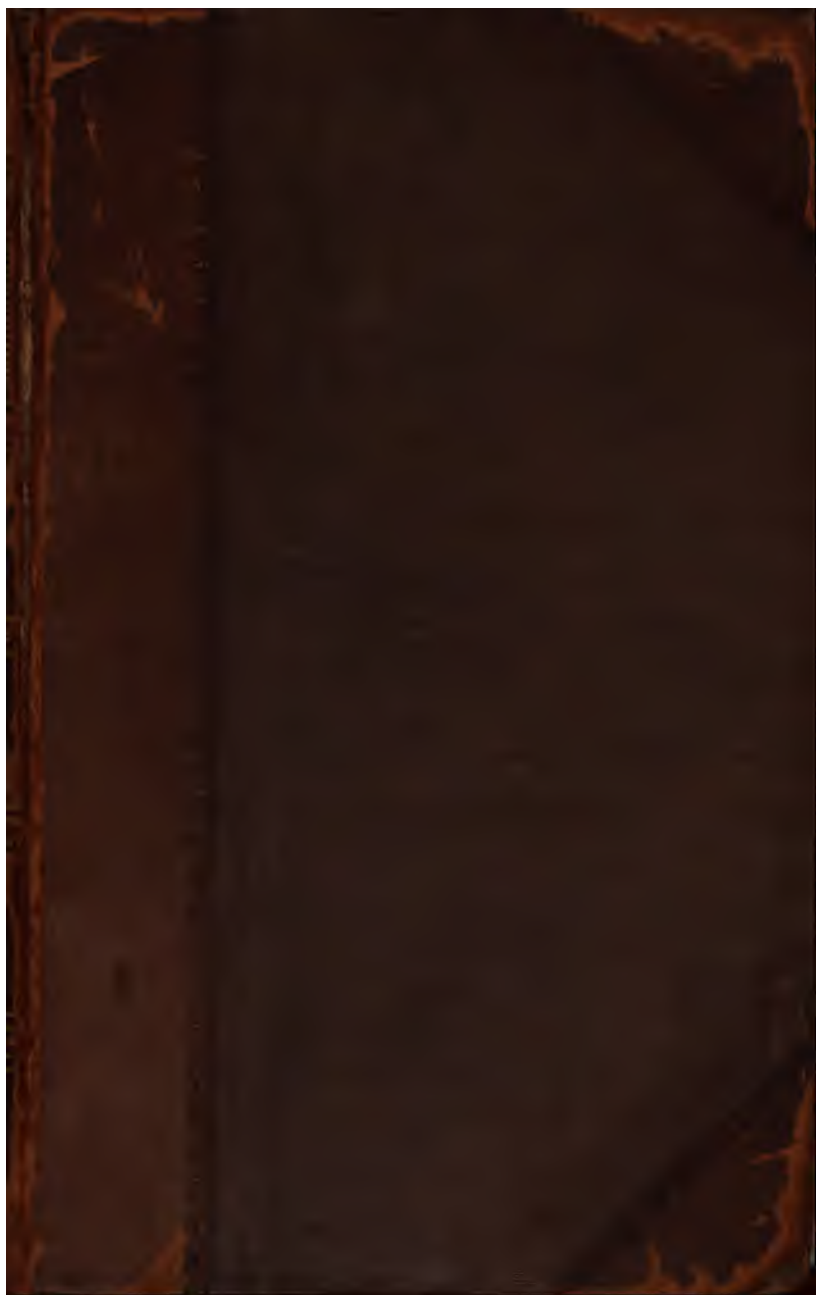
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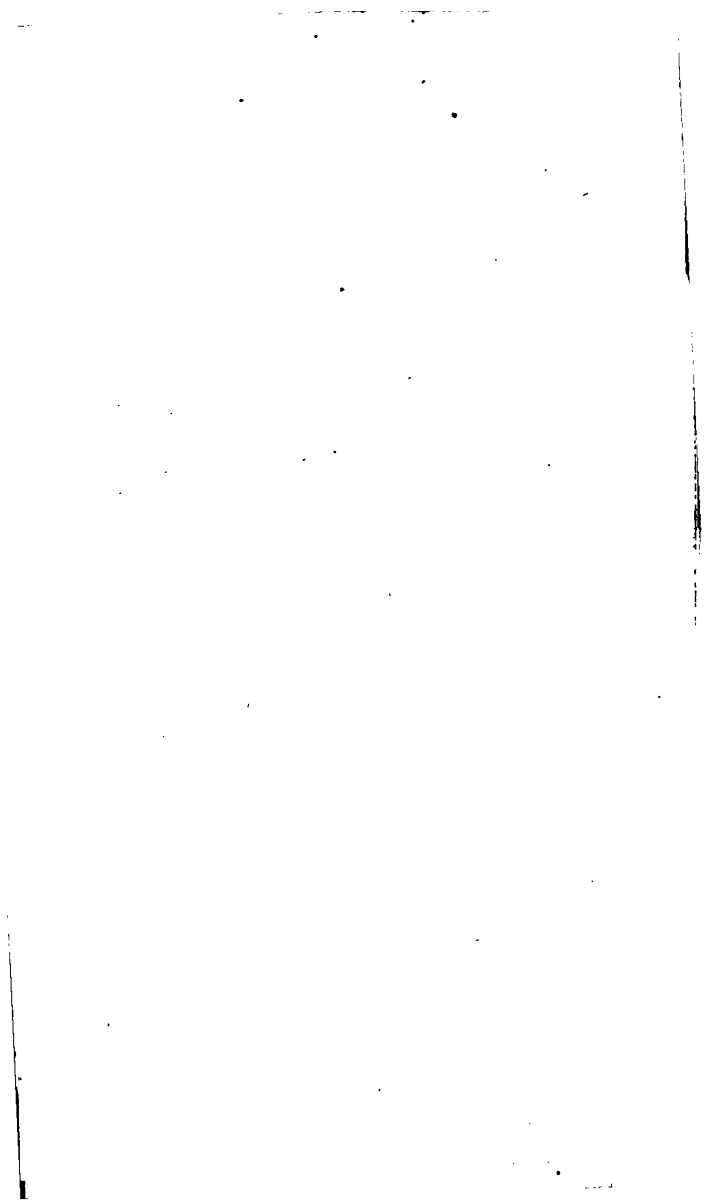
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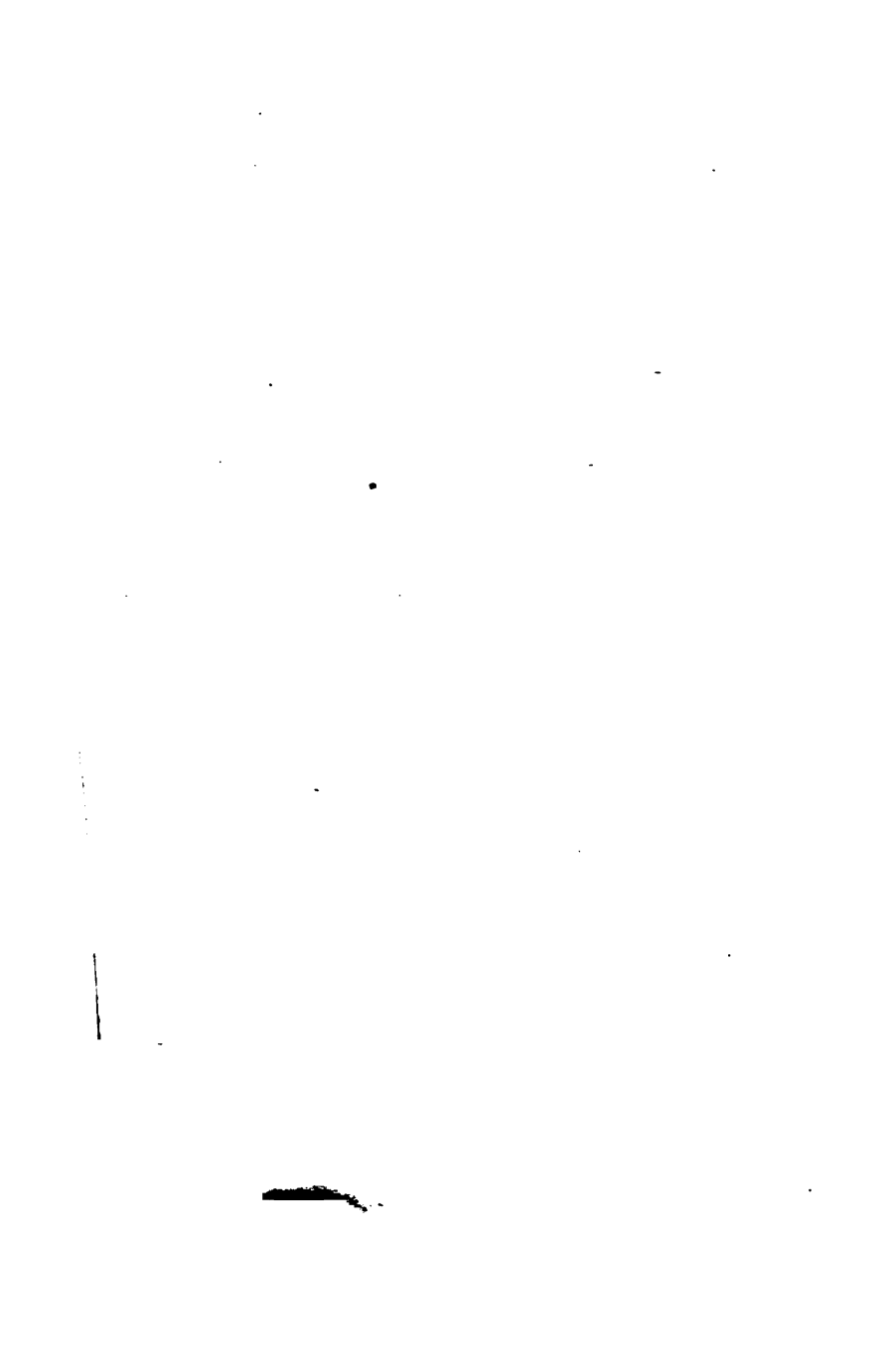


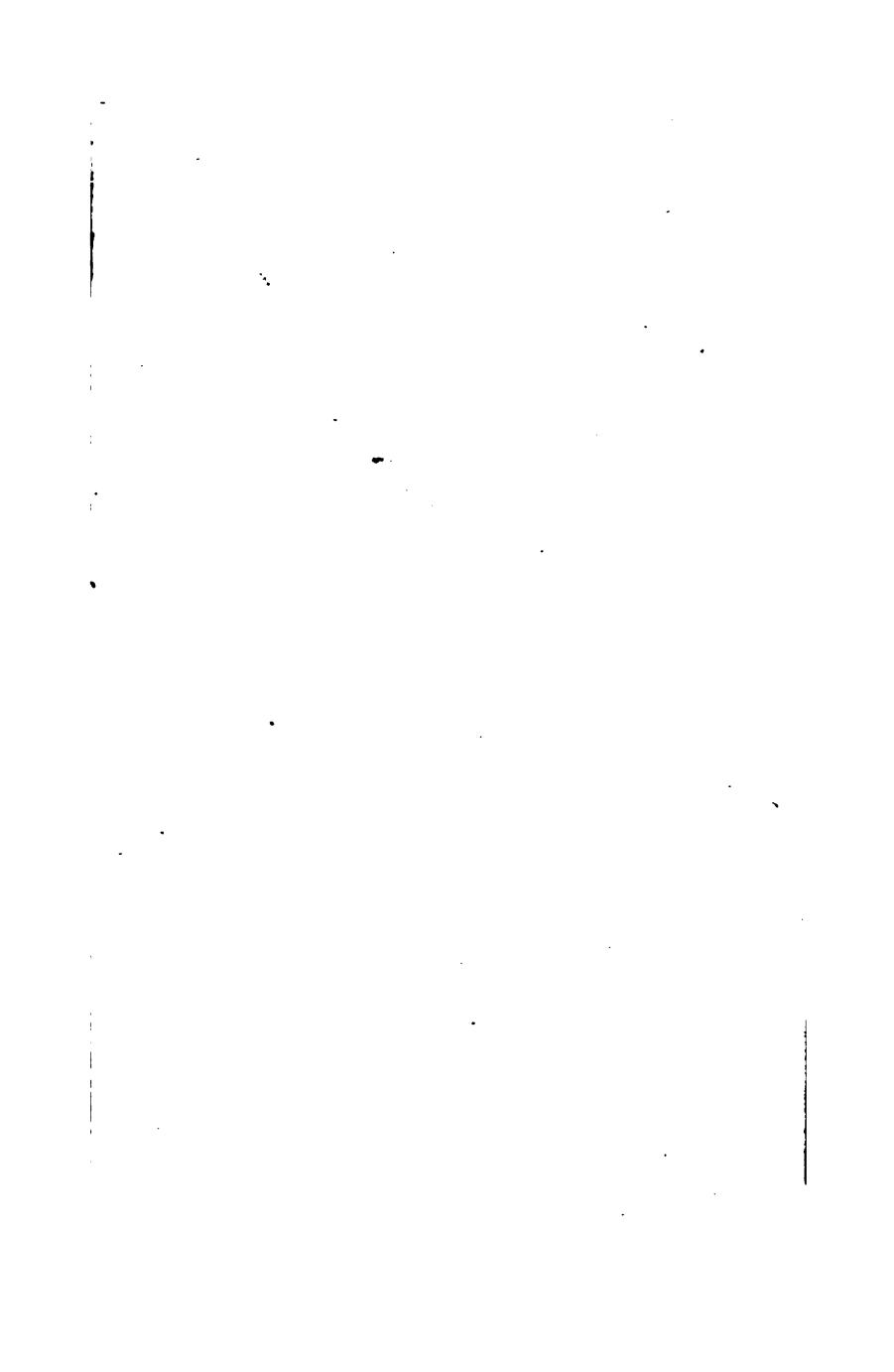
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STATUE IN GREENWICH HOSPITAL.

THE
LIFE OF NELSON.

REVISED AND ILLUSTRATED.

With Original Anecdotes, Notes, &c.

BY

THE OLD SAILOR.

Author of 'Tough Yarns' &c.



England expects every man will do his duty.

NELSON.

London.

FREDERIC SHOBERL, JUNR. LEICESTER STREET, LEICESTER SQUARE.

1836

184.

TO
KING WILLIAM THE FOURTH,

SOVEREIGN OF THE GREATEST MARITIME NATION
IN THE WORLD,

THIS RECORD OF THE LIFE

OF

AN OFFICER

WHO WAS HONOURED WITH HIS FRIENDSHIP,

AND

WHOSE GLORIOUS VICTORIES

SURPASS ALL OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BRITISH NAVY,

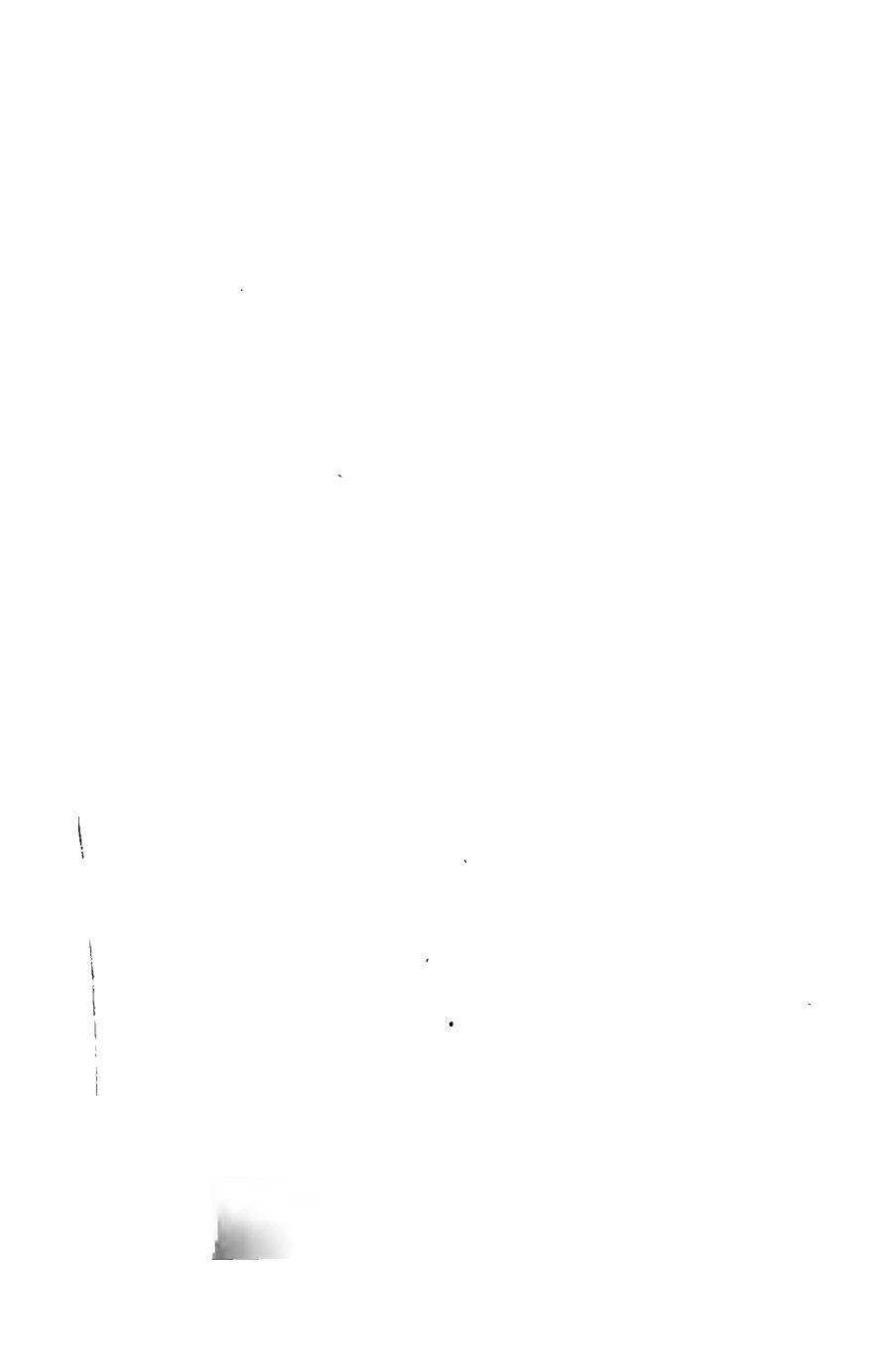
Is most respectfully Dedicated

BY

HIS MAJESTY'S

MOST DUTIFUL SUBJECT AND SERVANT,

THE OLD SAILOR.



PREFACE.

AMONGST the manifold dispensations of Divine Providence, there are none more conspicuous or more beneficial than that which sanctions the appearance from time to time of certain individuals, whose characters are calculated to operate as beacon-warnings against the practice of evil, or to act as powerful incentives to the performance of good. To expect infallibility from man would be totally inconsistent with a knowledge of the frailty of human nature; and therefore, whilst contemplating Nelson as the devoted patriot and the intrepid hero, no one can be wholly blind to imperfections in his private life, which, however, it must be admitted, resulted from no partiality to error, but to a certain weakness unhappily too frequent in great minds — that of bending their whole attention to one particular object, in the furtherance of which all their energies and talents are employed, and suffering themselves in moments of relaxation to be led and even governed by inferior capacities, in what they are too apt to consider the minor affairs of existence.

This was peculiarly the case with Nelson — he was himself fully sensible of it, and keen reflection embittered many hours that would otherwise have probably been passed in happiness. But it is his ardent love of country, his fervent attachment to his profession, his acute skill and accurate judgment in nautical affairs, that the historian has principally to deal with, and in all these the hero of many battles stands unrivalled and pre-eminent. But there is yet another trait which beautifully cements the whole together — the conqueror's humble and sincere gratitude to God, for rendering him the chief instrument of deliverance to his native land. The seamen loved him, for he was one of themselves both in theory and practice — the nation confided in him, for the rulers well knew that he would not betray the honour of his country. The affections of his men, and the veneration of his officers, were far more precious to his amiable heart than all the smiles of courtly favour, or the rich distinctions that were showered upon him. His titles, his orders, he valued more as evidences of England's glory, than as conferring personal exaltation upon himself; and the triumphs of that proud flag, which for a thousand years "has braved the battle and the breeze," were the dearest rewards to his noble spirit. In every thing connected with the service, he felt a deep and stirring interest — from the correct trim of a sail in his own ship, to the promotion he demanded for his compatriots in victory, and the encouragement he solicited for all ranks throughout the Navy. It was

chiefly, however, in the eager watching of an enemy's port, or in the keen pursuit of an enemy's fleet, that his genius shone forth with its full resplendence ; and his arrangements for an attack, as well as the avidity with which he seized upon any supposed advantage, plainly indicated, that whilst he had closely studied the former, he also possessed an intuitive quality of mind with respect to the latter that never misled him. His was not the valour that arises from mere animal courage — but it proceeded from nice discernment, sustained by daring intrepidity, and prompted by a conviction that the cause he was engaged in was a just one. Indeed, in whatever light we view the character of this illustrious seaman, there is a brilliancy that dazzles the eye, and sheds a fervid glow that gratifies and warms the heart. Let the young officer track his career from his first embarkation in the Navy, to the period that he lay enclosed in the coffin made from the main-mast of L'Orient, and he will find a splendid example, which nothing should deter him from endeavouring to emulate. Difficulties may present themselves — dangers may threaten — obstacles apparently insurmountable may obstruct the way — Nelson has shown that patience, perseverance, and prudence, can overcome them all.

The insular situation of Great Britain renders her wooden bulwarks the best possible defence ; but these would be useless without those gallant defenders, who, whether commanding on the quarter-deck, or handling the gun-tackle falls at quarters, must be the

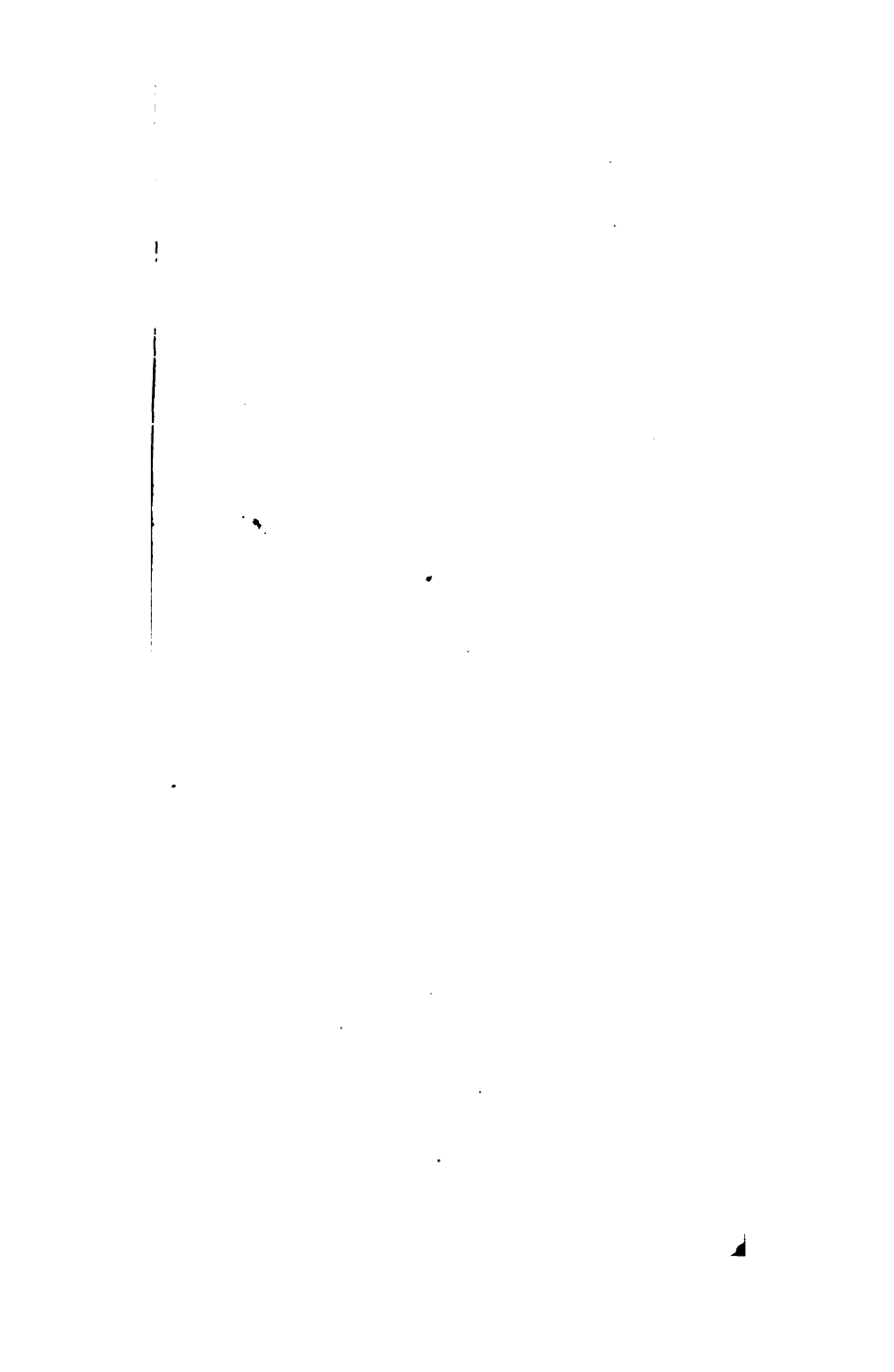
main-stay of Britain's power and influence. Our orchestras may charm the ear and feed the national pride of our countrymen with "Rule Britannia," but let it never be forgotten that it is to the gallant tar we are indebted for our naval supremacy, and may honest gratitude be manifested by deeds, and not evaporate in a musical effusion!

To add another trophy to the memory of Nelson, by commemorating his acts, is praiseworthy, and therefore merits patronage. A generous country will appreciate the motives of the historian, and the aspiring mariner, by perusing and striving to imitate the excellence pointed out in the following pages, will meet with a reward adequate to his exertions.

Fellow Countrymen and Brother Tars, it is a seaman speaks to you; and his earnest request is that you will constantly bear in remembrance, so as to reduce to practice, the telegraphic signal of Nelson at Trafalgar—

"ENGLAND EXPECTS THAT EVERY MAN WILL DO HIS DUTY."

THE OLD SAILOR.



FAC SIM

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An Off Anky
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Dec: 8th: 1797

THE
LIFE OF NELSON.

CHAPTER I.

FROM HIS BIRTH, 1758, TO THE YEAR 1783.

JUVENILE YEARS OF NELSON — HE ENTERS INTO THE NAVAL SERVICE — VOYAGE TO THE WEST INDIES — HIS SKILL IN PILOTAGE — ACCOMPANIES CAPTAIN LUTWIDGE IN THE VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY TOWARDS THE NORTH POLE — GOES TO THE EAST INDIES — APPOINTED ACTING LIEUTENANT OF THE WORCESTER — RECEIVES HIS COMMISSION AS LIEUTENANT OF THE LOWESTOFFE — PROCEEDS TO JAMAICA — REMOVED TO THE BRISTOL — APPOINTED TO THE BADGER BRIG — OBTAINS POST RANK — ASSISTS AT THE REDUCTION OF FORT JUAN — RETURNS TO ENGLAND ON ACCOUNT OF ILL HEALTH — SAILS WITH A CONVOY TO NEWFOUNDLAND — PROCEEDS TO THE WEST INDIES — RETURNS TO EUROPE ON THE CONCLUSION OF PEACE.

HORATIO was the fourth son of the Reverend Edmond Nelson, rector of Burnham Thorpe, in the county of Norfolk, by Catherine, daughter of the Rev. Dr. Suckling, prebendary of Westminster. His father's family had been long resident at Hilborough, in the same county, of which living the Nelsons have for a considerable period been the patrons. His mother was the granddaughter of Sir Charles Turner, of Warham, who married the sister of Sir Robert Walpole, and was thus related to the noble families of Walpole, Cholmondeley, and Townshend. Her ancestors had been seated at Woodton, in Norfolk, nearly three centuries.

Anecdotes of his Childhood.

The parsonage-house of the rectory of Burnham is rendered illustrious as the birthplace of Horatio Nelson. He there came into the world on the 29th of September, 1758, and was named after the first Lord Walpole, brother of the celebrated Sir Robert Walpole. The first rudiments of education were instilled into his aspiring mind at the High School of Norwich, whence he was afterwards removed to North Walsham. At this early period of life he imbibed from his father and his preceptors such principles of religion, honour, and morality, as were indelibly impressed on his mind, and laid the foundation of that spirit of unaffected piety which so eminently distinguished him in all the perilous and trying situations to which he was afterwards subjected.

In the tender years of infancy, he doubtless exhibited to the eye of his observant parents many traits indicative of the daring hardihood which formed such a conspicuous feature of his character. Of these few are on record: the following anecdotes have, however, been preserved.

Being on a visit, when five or six years old, at his grandmother's at Hilborough, he one day went out bird's-nesting, with a companion of about his own age. The hour of dinner arrived, but Horatio never made his appearance. The old lady became alarmed, and despatched messengers different ways, on horseback and on foot, in quest of him. The young rambler, whose companion had left him, was at length discovered sitting composedly on the bank of a brook, which he could not get over. His grandmother began to scold him for being absent without permission, and concluded her lecture with saying: "I wonder, child, that fear did not drive you home."—"Grandmother," replied Horatio, innocently, "I never saw Fear."

In his schoolmaster's garden there was a pear tree that produced very fine fruit, which was in the highest

Anecdotes of his Childhood.

degree tempting to the boys, and which they considered as their lawful booty: but the difficulty was how to get at them. The boldest were afraid to make the attempt. Young Nelson offered to undertake the hazardous enterprize: his companions lowered him down by means of sheets from the window of their bedroom, and, after he had stripped the tree, drew him up with the pears, which he divided among his schoolfellows, without reserving one for himself. "I only took them," he said, "because all the other boys were afraid."

He once set out on horseback, after the Christmas holydays, with his brother William, who was a year and a half older than himself, to return to school. William, who did not much like leaving home, prevailed on him to turn back, because there had been a fall of snow, and he told his father that it was too deep for them to venture through it. "If that is the case," said the father, "I shall not insist on your going; but make another trial, and I will leave it to your honour. If the road is dangerous, come back: but, remember, boys, I leave it to your honour." The snow was deep enough to have afforded an excuse, but Horatio was not to be persuaded to turn back a second time. "We must go on," said he; "remember, brother, it was left to our honour."

There can be no doubt that at an early age he exhibited many proofs of invincible spirit as well as of a mild and amiable disposition, which rendered him a great favourite with his mother, who was herself a woman of great firmness and fortitude, united with great meekness and piety. In one of the customary quarrels of brothers, in which William was his antagonist, when some friends, who happened to be present, alarmed at the noise, begged her to interfere in favour of the younger, she replied, with the utmost composure and visible satisfaction pervading

His uncle, Captain Suckling, engages to provide for him.

her expressive countenance, "Let them alone; little Horace will beat him: let Horace alone!"

Mrs. Nelson died in December, 1767, when Horatio was only nine years of age, leaving eight out of eleven children. Her brother, Captain Maurice Suckling, R. N. promised his father on this occasion to provide for one of his boys: and this officer appears to have been the only one of his mother's relations who after her decease took any notice of the family. The circumstances of the Rev. Mr. Nelson were somewhat straitened by his numerous family and by his own bad health, which compelled him frequently to resort to Bath for relief. During one of these absences, Horatio, then only twelve years old, being at home for the Christmas holydays, read in a newspaper that his uncle was appointed to the *Raisonné*,* of 64 guns. Anxious to relieve his father from some portion of his burden, he said to his brother, "Do, William, write to my father, and tell him I should like to go to sea with uncle Maurice." Aware of the generous motive of his child, and thoroughly understanding the boy's character, his father did not oppose his wish, having always felt persuaded that, in whatever profession he might be placed, he would climb to the top of the tree. He wrote on the subject to Captain Suckling, who in his answer evidently showed that he considered Horatio as unfit, from the delicacy of his frame and constitution, to encounter the hardships of a seaman's life. "What," said he, "has poor Horatio done, who is so weak that he, above all the rest, should be sent to rough it at sea?—But let him come; and the first time we go into action a cannon-ball may knock off his head and provide for him at once."

* For many years afterwards guard-ship at Sheerness, and in several instances the first embarkation of those who became naval heroes.—THE OLD SAILOR.

Makes a Voyage to the West Indies.

A summons soon arrived for Horatio to join his ship, which was then lying in the Medway. His father accompanied him to London, where the boy was put into the Chatham coach, which set him down with the other passengers, and he was left to find his way on board as well as he could. After strolling about for some time in the cold, his forlorn appearance was noticed by an officer, who questioned him, and who, being acquainted with his uncle, gave him some refreshment. By his directions he was enabled to get on board the *Raisonnable*; but, unluckily, his uncle was not on board, neither had any person been apprized of his coming. According to his own account, he paced the deck during the rest of that day, without receiving the slightest notice from any person on board; and it was not till the second day that, as he expressed it, somebody 'kindly took compassion on him.' There can be no doubt that Nelson remembered through life the first days of wretchedness which he passed in the service, and that this experience influenced that courtesy and kind consideration which he uniformly manifested towards all, even down to the very humblest rank, who were placed under his command.

The *Raisonnable* was one of the ships commissioned in 1770, when a dispute relative to the Falkland Islands threatened a war with Spain. The misunderstanding, however, was soon adjusted; the *Raisonnable* was paid off; and Captain Suckling was appointed to the command of the *Triumph*,* of 74 guns, then stationed as a guardship at Chatham. Deeming this too inactive a life for his nephew, he placed him on board a West Indiaman, commanded by Mr. John Rathbone, an excellent seaman, who had served under him as master's-mate in the *Dreadnought*. Having

* Subsequently one of the most celebrated ships in the navy of England.—THE OLD SAILOR.

Is reconciled to the King's service.

made one voyage, he returned to his uncle in the *Triumph*, in July, 1772.

By this voyage to the West Indies young Nelson had gained a considerable accession of practical professional knowledge; but Captain Suckling had the mortification to discover also that he had conceived a strong aversion to the king's service, as was manifest from his frequent repetition of the sentiment — "Aft the most honour, forward the better seaman." This he had no doubt learned from Rathbone, who was probably a disappointed man, and who, without any unfriendly intentions, might wish to warn him against the mortifications which he had himself experienced. Be this as it may, his uncle's good sense pointed out to him the best means of combating this unreasonable antipathy of his inexperienced nephew, and to reconcile him to the duty of a king's ship. The ambition of becoming a thorough-bred seaman, which the young Horatio in an eminent degree possessed, was the instrument by which Captain Suckling attempted and effected this revolution. His nephew was placed on his return from the West Indies on the quarter-deck of the *Triumph*; and, though he had thus the "aft" situation of "most honour," his uncle contrived that he should at the same time enjoy all the advantages of the "forward," which were by some supposed to form "the better seaman." He held out as a reward to the aspiring mariner that, if he attended with diligence to his duty, he should be permitted to go in the cutter and decked long-boat, attached to the ship of the commanding officer at Chatham. This operated on the mind of his nephew as he wished; and the consequence was that young Nelson became an excellent pilot for vessels of that class sailing from Chatham to the Tower of London, or down the many Channels to the North Foreland. Each subsequent trial of navigating the difficult out-

Voyage in search of a North-East Passage.

lets of the Thames, as well as the Swin and other passages to Yarmouth, inspired him with a sense of his own ability, and created that self-confidence which is the essential characteristic of a fearless and undaunted mind.

Early in the year 1773, two vessels were fitted out by government for a voyage of discovery towards the north pole. Its object was to ascertain how far it was possible to sail in that direction, to decide for ever the long-agitated question concerning the practicability of a north-east passage into the Pacific Ocean, and to make such astronomical observations as might prove of service to navigation. The *Racehorse* and *Carcase* bomb-ketches were fitted out expressly for this expedition; the command of the former was given to the Hon. Captain Phipps, and the latter to Captain Lutwidge. A voyage in which so much was to be seen and learned excited the ardent curiosity and enterprising genius of young Nelson, and filled him with an irresistible desire to make one of the party. The dangers they were likely to encounter only served to stimulate his ambition; and though instructions had been issued that no boys should be received on board, yet he was so earnest in his solicitations to be appointed coxswain to Captain Lutwidge, that this officer, struck with the undaunted resolution he manifested to be employed in such an arduous undertaking, received him in that capacity, and thus laid the foundation of a friendship which continued without abatement through every subsequent period of life.

The vessels employed in this service were selected for their strength. Two masters of Greenlandmen were employed as pilots for each ship. The *Racehorse* was furnished with chain-pumps on Captain Bentinck's improved plan; and both vessels were provided with the simple apparatus for distilling fresh

The Ships beset with Ice.

from salt water, invented by Dr. Irving, who accompanied the expedition. It consisted merely in fitting a tube to the cook's boiler, and in applying a wet mop to its surface while the vapour was passing, by which means from thirty to forty gallons of fresh water were obtained every day.

The ships sailed from the Nore on the 4th of June, 1773 : and, after proceeding along the coast of Spitzbergen, and ranging between the land and the ice for several days, in the afternoon of the 7th of July, the ice setting very close, they ran between two pieces, and were suddenly stopped. The ice, indeed, now set so fast down, that they were soon enclosed, and obliged to heave through, for two hours, with ice-anchors from either quarter ; nor were they quite clear of the ice till midnight.

On the 25th, the Carcase being becalmed near Moffen Island, Captain Lutwidge took the opportunity of surveying it. While thus employed, the boats were attacked by a herd of walruses, which were with difficulty driven away. On another occasion, two officers in a boat belonging to the Racehorse, having fired at and wounded one of these animals, it immediately dived, and brought up a number of its companions, which joined in an attack on the boat. They wrested an oar from one of the men ; and it was with the utmost difficulty that they were prevented from staving or upsetting the boat : till a boat belonging to the Carcase, steered by the intrepid young coxswain, came up, and effectually dispersed the assailants.

On the 30th of July they were in latitude 80° 13', longitude 18° 48' E., among what are called the Seven Islands, and surrounded by ice, without any appearance of an opening for the ships. About midnight, as, in these latitudes, at this season of the year, the sun never sets, Captain Phipps despatched

The Ships beset with Ice.

the master of the *Racehorse* in the four-oared boat to try to find an opening by which the ships might proceed; and with directions, if he could reach the shore, to ascend one of the mountains, in order to explore the state of the ice to the eastward and northward. Captain Lutwidge, having also employed a boat conducted by his young coxswain, for the same purpose, joined the master of the *Racehorse* on shore, where they ascended a high mountain, from which they had a prospect extending ten or twelve leagues to the east and north-east, over one continued plain of smooth ice, bounded only by the horizon. They saw land stretching to the south-east, laid down in the Dutch charts as islands, and plainly perceived that the main body of ice which the ships had coasted from west to east joined these islands, and stretched away from them to what is called the north-east land. In returning about seven in the morning to their ships, which had meanwhile been so completely surrounded with ice that, with their ice-anchors out, they had moored alongside a field of it, the crews were frequently obliged to haul the boats over ice, which had closed during their absence, into other openings.

On the same morning, about nine o'clock, having a light breeze to the eastward, they cast off, and again endeavoured to force their way; but, at noon, finding the ice too close packed to proceed, they again moored to a field. In the afternoon, they filled their casks with fresh water from the ice, which they found to be very pure and soft. The ice-field, to which both vessels were moored, was from twenty-two to twenty-five feet thick. The ice closed fast around the ships, leaving merely a hole, or lake, about a mile and a half in circumference, in which both ships lay fast to the ice with ice-anchors. The weather was unusually fine, mild, and clear, without a breath of air, and the water perfectly smooth. The crews of

Dangerous Situation.

the ships were playing all day upon the ice; but the pilots, finding themselves much further north than they had ever been before, and considering the advanced state of the season, began to entertain serious apprehensions of being completely beset.

On the 1st of August, the ice came on them so fast that not the smallest opening was to be seen. The two ships, though separated by ice, were within two lengths of each other, and neither had room to swing. The ice, which on the preceding day had been quite flat and almost level with the water, was now in many places forced higher than the mainyard by the outer pieces pressing upon those inside. A wet, foggy day succeeded, the wind blowing fresh from the westward; but, though the ice immediately about the ships seemed looser than before, it set in again so fast that there appeared no probability of extricating them without a strong east or north-east wind.

On the 3^d, the weather was fine, clear, and calm. It was perceived that the ships had been driven far to the eastward; but the ice was closer than ever; the passage by which they had come from the westward was quite closed up, and no open water any where in sight. At the suggestion of the pilots, the crews were set to work to cut away the ice, in order to warp the vessels through the small openings to the westward. This was a most laborious undertaking, the ice being so deep that they were often obliged to cut through pieces twelve feet thick; and, after toiling the whole day, they were not able to move the ships more than three hundred yards. They had meanwhile been driven, with the ice-field itself, to the northward and eastward by the current, which had also forced the loose ice from the westward between the islands, where it had become what the Greenlandmen call packed, or piled piece above piece, to a considerable height, and as firm as the main body.

Hunting a Bear.

It was about this time that Nelson earnestly solicited and at length obtained the command of a four-oared boat, ingeniously constructed for the purpose of exploring channels and breaking the ice, and manned by twelve men; and to this period also must be referred the following anecdote.

One night, during the mid-watch, young Nelson stole from the ship with one of his comrades, under cover of a fog, and set out over the ice in pursuit of a bear. It was not long before they were missed; search was made for them, but in vain; and Captain Lutwidge and his officers became extremely alarmed for their safety. Between three and four in the morning, the fog clearing off, the two adventurers were discovered on the ice, at a considerable distance, attacking a huge white bear. Nelson had a musket, but, the lock being injured, the piece would not go off. A signal was immediately made for their return. His comrade called upon him to obey it; but he replied, "Never mind; let me but get a blow at this devil with the but-end of my musket, and then we shall have him." A chasm in the ice, which separated him from the bear, probably saved his life. Captain Lutwidge, perceiving his danger, ordered a gun to be fired, and this had the effect of frightening the beast away. His assailant immediately returned to the ship, where the Captain severely reprimanded him for conduct so unbecoming the office which he held, and sternly asked what could be his motive for hunting a bear. "I wished, sir," said he, pouting his lip, as was his custom when agitated, "to get the skin for my father."

On the 5th of August, Captain Phipps sent Mr. Walden, one of his midshipmen, and two pilots, to an island about twelve miles off, since named Walden's Island, to ascertain if any open water was to be seen. They brought back information on the 6th that

Preparations for leaving the Ships.

the ice was open to the westward, round the point by which they had got in; and also that on the island the wind had blown very fresh from the eastward, though it had been almost calm the whole time where the ships lay. This circumstance greatly lessened the hopes previously entertained of the immediate effect of an easterly wind in clearing the bay.

They had now no other alternative than patiently to wait for a change of wind, or to betake themselves to the boats. The ships had at this time driven into shoal water, having only fourteen fathom; and should either they or the ice, to which they were fast, take the ground, they must inevitably be lost. After a due consideration of the various difficulties which presented themselves in this perilous state, Captain Phipps sent for the officers of both ships, and communicated to them his intention of preparing the boats for going away. They were accordingly hoisted out, and every precaution taken to render them secure and comfortable. Canvas bread-bags were made, in case it should be necessary to desert the ships. In the mean time, as the water shoaled and the vessels were driving fast towards some rocks on the north-east, men were sent with lead and line to the northward and eastward, to sound wherever they found cracks in the ice, that they might have notice before either the ships or the ice to which they were moored took the ground, as in the event of their striking they must have been instantly crushed or upset.

On the 7th, in the morning, Captain Phipps set out in the launch, which was dragged much more easily than was expected. After getting it about two miles, he returned with the men to their dinner; and, finding the ice rather more open near the ships, he was induced to attempt to move them. The wind, though little, being easterly, they made sail, and got the ships about a mile to the westward; still they were

They clear the Ice.

not now by a great deal so far to the westward as when they were first beset. All sail was kept on them, that they might force through whenever the ice should yield in the smallest degree. The people behaved like true British seamen, laboured assiduously at hauling the launches, and seemed reconciled to the idea of quitting the ships, having the greatest confidence in their officers. Still, with all their exertions, it would not be possible to get the boats to the outside of the ice in less than a week. It was therefore resolved to keep moving the boats forward, and at the same time to seize every opportunity of getting the ships through.

On the two following days, they were agreeably surprised to find that the ships had been driven much more to the westward than they could have expected, and that the ice itself had drifted still farther in that direction. On the 9th, the ships passed the launches, which were then hoisted on board. Next morning, the wind springing up from north-north-east, all sail was set, and the ships forced through a great deal of very heavy ice. They were frequently struck, and with such violence, that one stroke broke the shank of the *Racehorse's* best bower anchor; but by noon they had the good fortune to clear all the ice, and were safely out at sea. On the 11th, they came to an anchor in *Smeerenberg Harbour*, *Amsterdam Island*, the westernmost point of which is called *Hakluyt's Headland*. Here they remained a few days, to recruit the men after their severe fatigues.

The summer had proved unusually favourable for the object of this voyage, and the season was now so far advanced that nothing more could with prudence be attempted. They had traversed $17\frac{1}{2}$ degrees of longitude, between the latitudes of 79° and $81^{\circ} 36'$, carefully exploring that barrier of ice which baffled their further progress: and, having thoroughly satisfied

Nelson goes to the East Indies.

themselves of the impracticability of a passage to the Pacific Ocean in that direction, the ships returned to England, and were paid off in the month of October.

Captain Suckling welcomed Horatio on his arrival, and had the gratification to learn from the commanders of both vessels that his nephew had conducted himself in such a manner as to deserve every encouragement that could be bestowed on him. A squadron was at this time equipping for the East Indies, under the command of Sir Edward Hughes.* Young Nelson, anxious to visit regions so different from those which he had just quitted, and to secure the professional advantages which might be anticipated from service in that quarter, solicited his uncle to procure for him a situation in one of the ships destined for this expedition. Captain Suckling accordingly obtained him a berth in the Seahorse of 20 guns, under the gallant Captain Farmer.

In that ship he was at first stationed to watch in the foretop,† where his good conduct soon gained him the favourable notice of the master, in whose watch he was, and on whose recommendation he was rated as a midshipman by Captain Farmer. During his service in the Seahorse, he visited almost every part of the Indian seas, from Bengal to Bussorah; and if, in the course of a year and a half, no opportunity presented itself for the display of his characteristic hardihood, he had the good fortune, by his unusual proficiency in seamanship and his mild and amiable manners, not only to conciliate the esteem of all on

* A full length portrait of this officer may be seen in the Painted Hall, Greenwich.

† So his biographers state, but it is rather improbable that a young officer in the navy, the nephew of Captain Suckling, should be rated as a fore-topman. The station list no doubt placed him in the fore-top during the performance of any particular duty aloft; and hence a mistake has arisen that he did his duty as a fore-mast man. —THE OLD SAILOR.

His determination to be a Hero.

board his own vessel, but also to attract the notice and gain the friendly regard of the commander-in-chief. The climate of India, however, so injurious to European constitutions in general, undermined his health. His disorder baffled the power of medicine, reduced him almost to a skeleton, and deprived him of the use of his limbs. Sir Edward Hughes, who always treated him with the utmost kindness, and Captain Farmer united in recommending his return to England, as the only chance that was left of restoring him to health.

Captain Pigot was just at that time coming home with the *Dolphin*, of 20 guns. To his care Nelson was particularly commended by the commander-in-chief; and, had it not been for the generous attentions of Captain Pigot during the voyage, the patient could not have lived to reach his native land. Such were the salutary effects of that officer's soothing kindness and the change of climate, that, on his arrival in England, Horatio's health was, in a great measure, restored.

It is not wonderful that, on quitting India, his professional prospects overcast, and his body broken down by disease, his spirits should have been exceedingly depressed, and his mind sunk in gloom. Long afterwards, he described his feelings at this time in the following terms. "I was impressed," he said, "with a feeling that I should never rise in my profession. My mind was staggered, on considering the difficulties I had to struggle with and the little interest I possessed. I could not perceive any means of attaining the object of my ambition. After a long and gloomy reverie, in which I almost wished myself overboard, a sudden glow of patriotism kindled within me at the thought which presented my king and country as my patron. 'Well, then,' I exclaimed, 'I will be a hero! Putting my trust in Providence,

He passes his Examination for Lieutenant.

I will brave every danger!" From that time, he often said, a brilliant orb was suspended before his mind's eye, which led him onward to renown. Though he well knew that his dejection was attributable only to ill health and low spirits, yet he always cherished the idea that the succeeding radiance was prophetic of glory, and that the light which led him on was a light from Heaven.

During his absence, his uncle, Captain Suckling, had been appointed comptroller of the Navy; and, through his influence, as soon as the *Dolphin* was paid off, in September, 1776, his nephew received an order from the commander-in-chief at Portsmouth to act as lieutenant in the *Worcester*, 64, Captain Mark Robinson, who was under sailing orders for Gibraltar with a convoy. In this service he was engaged till April the following year, and during the greatest part of that interval in uncommonly boisterous weather. A strict attention to his professional duties, added to seven years' practice, had rendered Nelson such a complete seaman, that though he was only in his nineteenth year, yet Captain Robinson placed the greatest confidence in his skill and prudence, and was frequently heard to say that he felt as easy at night when it was Nelson's watch as when the oldest officer on board had charge of the ship. Thus we have in this illustrious character a striking example that to learn to command it is first necessary to obey, and that, in order to obtain distinction in any profession, something more than a superficial knowledge is absolutely requisite.

A week after quitting the *Worcester*, on the 8th of April, 1777, Nelson passed his examination for lieutenant. His uncle presided at the board; and, after the examination, which terminated most creditably for the young aspirant, Captain Suckling rose, and introduced him to the examining officers as his

Serves in the *Lowestoffe* under Captain Locker.

nephew. "But why," asked one of them, "were we not apprized of this relationship before?"—"Because," replied his uncle, "I did not wish the younker to be favoured on that account. I felt convinced that his examination would do him honour, and I was not mistaken." On the following day, Nelson received his commission as second lieutenant of the *Lowestoffe*, 32, Captain William Locker,* with whom he proceeded to Jamaica.

The Americans, who had declared themselves independent of Great Britain, were at this time harassing our trade in the West Indies, which was suffering severely from their privateers. Shortly after the arrival of the *Lowestoffe* at Jamaica, during a cruise off the island, a circumstance occurred in which Nelson gave a striking indication of that daring spirit which no danger could ever subdue or appal. In a strong gale of wind and heavy sea, an American letter of marque was discovered and chased; finding that she had no chance of escape, she struck her colours. The captain ordered his first lieutenant to board the prize. The latter went below to put on his side arms, but they were mislaid. While he was seeking them, Captain Locker came on deck. Seeing the boat alongside in danger of being swamped every moment, and anxious to take immediate possession of the privateer, fearing that she would founder, he exclaimed, "Have I then no officer who can board the prize?" Nelson did not immediately offer himself, expecting every moment that the first lieutenant would return: but, seeing the master run to the gangway with the intention of jumping into the boat, he stopped him, saying, "It is my turn now: if I come back it will be your's." He leaped into the boat, which went quite over the deck of the prize, the latter having

* Afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of Greenwich Hospital. His portrait is in the Painted Hall.

Appointed Lieutenant of the Bristol.

carried such a press of canvas, in the hope of escaping, as to be completely water-logged. On this, as on many future occasions, he reaped the benefit of that practical knowledge of seamanship which, from his first entering the service, he had been solicitous to acquire. Captain Locker, charmed with his young lieutenant, heartily congratulated him on his success : he assured him of his constant friendship, and encouraged him always to ask any indulgence which it might be in his power to grant. Thus commenced a friendship which ended only with the life of Captain Locker. He was revered as a foster-parent by Nelson, who in the height of his glory eagerly seized every opportunity of declaring that to his example and instruction he was indebted for all the honour that he had acquired.

The Lowestoffe, being afterwards attached to the fleet, had but little scope for active service. Nelson, therefore, solicited of Captain Locker the command of the schooner which served as a tender to the frigate. His request being complied with, he immediately proceeded in that small vessel to render himself a complete pilot for all the intricate passages among the islands called The Keys, situated to the northward of St. Domingo.

About this time Nelson had the misfortune to lose his excellent patron and kinsman, Captain Suckling. His own merits had so warmly interested Captain Locker in his favour, that, on his recommendation, Sir Peter Parker, commander-in-chief on the West India station, appointed him third lieutenant of his flag-ship, the Bristol. His successor in the Lowestoffe was Lieutenant Cuthbert Collingwood.* In a few months Nelson became by regular gradations first lieutenant ; and, on the 8th of December, 1778, was

* Portrait in the Painted Hall, Greenwich.

Commands the Badger brig.

appointed commander of the *Badger* brig, Collingwood again succeeding him in the *Bristol*.

The *Badger* was soon afterwards ordered to protect the Mosquito shore and the Bay of Honduras from the depredations of American privateers; and of this duty her commander acquitted himself so much to the satisfaction of the settlers, that they unanimously voted him their thanks, and expressed deep regret on his quitting the station. While Nelson commanded the *Badger*, she was lying in Montego Bay, Jamaica, when the *Glasgow*, of 20 guns, came into the bay and anchored. Two hours afterwards the ship took fire, owing to the carelessness of the steward, who went down into the after-hold with a candle for the purpose of stealing rum. No sooner did Nelson perceive the state of the *Glasgow* than he hastened to the spot with his boats, and essentially contributed, by his unceasing exertions and presence of mind, to the preservation of the crew. At his suggestion the powder was thrown overboard and the guns pointed upward. They were all loaded; and, but for these precautions, not only the other ships in the harbour, but also the houses in the town, would probably have been much injured. In spite of all the efforts made to save the ship, she was entirely consumed. The only life lost by this dreadful accident was that of the master, who was snatched from the flames so severely scorched, that he expired the next morning on board the *Badger*. From the small size of that vessel, she had not a sufficient shelter for so many additional persons; and the constant rains greatly affected the health of her crew during the passage to Port Royal, where the sufferers were landed.

Meanwhile, his friend, Captain Locker, whose health, almost ever since his arrival, had suffered severely from the climate of the West Indies, had been

Made Post into the Hinchinbrooke.

obliged by that cause to quit the Lowestoffe and return to England. Soon afterwards, that vessel formed one of a small squadron sent to the Gulf of Dolce, on the south side of the Bay of Honduras, to intercept some Spanish register-ships, which had taken shelter under the strong fortress of San Fernando de Omoa. The fort was attacked and stormed, and the register-ships secured: in the former, the captors made prize of two hundred and fifty quintals of quicksilver, and in the latter of about three millions of piastres. From the participation in the advantages of this brilliant enterprise Captain Locker was thus debarred by ill health, and his promising *protégé* by excess of patronage. It has been remarked as characteristic of Nelson, that in his letters he never mentioned the circumstance which deprived him of a share in such a prize.

During these transactions, on the 11th of June, 1779, Nelson obtained post-rank, through the same generous influence which had removed him from the Lowestoffe. He had therefore neither reason nor inclination to complain. He was not yet twenty-one. He had been nine years in the service, and had made himself not only an able officer, but likewise a most skilful pilot, which from the first had been the object of his constant ambition. Endowed by nature with uncommon quickness of perception, and a ready fund of resource, he was far from suffering talents of such value to be bestowed in vain.

The first ship to which Captain Nelson was appointed, after his promotion, was the Hinchinbrooke. It was soon after this event that the arrival of Count D'Estaing, at St. Domingo, with a numerous fleet and army, led to the expectation of an immediate attack on Jamaica. At this critical juncture, the command of the batteries at Port Royal, which, being the key to the naval force of Kingston and to

Expedition to the River San Juan.

the seat of government at Spanish Town, was considered the most important post in Jamaica, was entrusted to Captain Nelson.

The French fleet was estimated to have on board a force of 25,000 men, while the whole number of troops that could be mustered on the island amounted to no more than 7,000. It was no doubt from the consideration of the inadequacy of the latter to make a successful resistance that Nelson, in writing to his friends in England, told them they must not be surprised to hear of his learning to speak French. D'Estaing, however, made no attempt with his formidable armament, and, in January, 1780, an expedition began to be prepared in Jamaica against the Spanish territories. It was directed by General Dalling, then governor of the island. Its object was to take possession of the river San Juan, and the Lake of Nicaragua, from which it flows. The inner boundary of the lake is only four or five leagues distant from the Pacific Ocean, through a level country. It was planned that a chain of posts should be established from ocean to ocean across the isthmus, which would have the effect of cutting off the communication of the Spaniards between their North and South American colonies. The insurrections which had already taken place in Santa Fé, Popayan, and many parts of Peru, seemed to afford facilities for such an enterprise; and sanguine expectations were entertained of shaking the Spanish dominion in South America to its foundation. These brilliant prospects, however, were blasted by the delay in sending out a force from England, and the obstacles which General Dalling had to encounter in Jamaica.

On the 3^d of February, 1780, the first detachment destined for this service, consisting of 500 men, left Jamaica under the convoy of Captain Nelson in the *Hinchinbrooke*, and landed on the 11th at Cape Gra-

Difficult Ascent of the River.

tias a Dios, in Honduras. Here they remained for a month encamped on a swampy, unwholesome plain, where they were joined by a party of the 79th regiment from Black River. Thus reinforced, they again embarked. Having anchored at several places on the Musquito shore, to take on board their Indian allies, who were to furnish proper boats for the navigation of the river, and to accompany them in the expedition, they reached the River San Juan on the 24th of March.

Here, had Nelson chosen to abide by the letter of his orders, his services might have terminated: but, as not a man belonging to the expedition had ever been up the river or knew the distance of any fortress upon it from the mouth, the Captain of the Hinchinbrooke resolved to carry the soldiers up himself. About two hundred men were accordingly embarked in two of the ships' boats, and in the Musquito shore craft. As it was now near the end of the dry season, the river contained very little water, and the shoals and sandy beaches rendered the passage difficult. In some of the narrow channels, the men were frequently obliged to quit their boats, and to unite their strength in the water to track and push them along. This labour continued for several days: then, arriving in deeper water, they made quicker progress. Still they had currents and occasional rapids and falls to contend with, and these would have been insurmountable but for the skill of the Indians in managing the boats; the efforts of the seamen in forcing them up the river against the current; and the encouragement given to both by the personal example and perseverance of Captain Nelson.

On the 9th of April, they reached the island of San Bartolomeo, where the Spaniards had erected a small battery of nine or ten swivels, manned by about twenty men, as an outpost: it commanded a rapid

Capture of San Bartolomeo.

and difficult part of the river. Nelson, who was the first on every service, whether by day or by night, sprang on shore, followed by a few brave seamen and soldiers, in the face of a severe fire. The ground was so muddy that he lost his shoes, and had some difficulty in extricating himself. He advanced, however, barefooted, and, to use his own expression, "boarded the battery." The hardihood of the attempt, in which he was bravely supported by Captain Despard,* so terrified the Spaniards, that they ran away, though, from the nature of the ground, they might have cut off the whole party.

The castle of San Juan is situated about sixteen miles higher up the river. The ammunition and stores were landed some miles below the castle, and transported through woods that were almost impassable. One of the men was bitten under the eye by a snake, which darted upon him from a tree, and he presently died. Nelson himself had a narrow escape from the same kind of reptile. Being extremely fatigued, he had ordered his hammock to be slung under some trees, and he was startled from sleep by a lizard, called the monitory lizard, from its warning persons of the approach of venomous animals, passing over his face. He started up, and, the clothes being hastily removed, a large snake of a most venomous species was discovered lying coiled up at his feet. He was not so lucky in regard to a different kind of poison: having drunk at a spring into which some branches of the manchineel-tree had been thrown, its effects were so injurious that, in the opinion of some of his friends, he never completely recovered from them.

* Subsequently, Colonel Despard, who was executed with his treasonable associates at Horsemonger Lane jail, for conspiring to take the life of George III. as he proceeded to open the session of parliament.

Reduction of the Castle of San Juan.

On the 11th of April, the assailants appeared before the castle of San Juan; and Nelson, not less prompt in thought than bold in action, knowing that the unhealthy season was at hand, and that there was no time to be lost, advised that it should be carried immediately by assault. His recommendation was overruled by the military commander, who determined on reducing it by siege. During this operation, not a gun was fired that was not pointed either by him or by Captain Despard, chief engineer to the expedition. Meanwhile, so great was the want of provisions, that the troops were obliged to subsist on the broth of boiled monkeys—a kind of food which Nelson often declared nothing could induce him to touch, after seeing their appearance in the copper*. This cause, combined with fatigue and the climate, began to undermine the health of the men; and, on the 24th of April, when the castle surrendered, so general was the illness, that, exclusively of the few who were well enough to do garrison duty, there were not orderly men sufficient to attend the sick. The want of medicines tended to aggravate their wretched situation; for, though the expedition had been amply provided with hospital stores, these had been left at the mouth of the river, for want of craft to carry them up. The reduction of the castle procured for the conquerors none of the accommodations which they so much needed; the sickness and mortality continued to increase till the living became incapable of burying the dead, who were left a prey to the rapacious beasts and birds. After keeping possession of the castle till October, the miserable remnant of the expedition re-embarked for Bluefields,

* A fat roasted monkey is considered a dainty by the Indians of South America. Its appearance resembles that of a burnt child. I have, however, in the course of my life eaten much worse food.—THE OLD SAILOR.

Nelson is obliged by ill health to return to England.

an English settlement about twenty leagues to the northward, but a great number of the men died on the passage. A few who seemed most healthy were left behind in the castle, which was retaken by the Spaniards as soon as the season permitted. Out of eighteen hundred men composing the expedition, only three hundred and eighty-four returned, and of the crew of the Hinchinbrooke, amounting to two hundred, no more than ten survived.*

During the siege of the castle, Nelson himself had been seized with the prevailing dysentery, and in this state he received intelligence by the Victor sloop, which arrived from Jamaica with a reinforcement, that he had been appointed by Sir Peter Parker to succeed Captain Glover in the Janus, of 44 guns. The day before the surrender of the castle he sailed for Bluefields, (Collingwood being made post into the Hinchinbrooke,) and embarked in the Victor for Jamaica. On his arrival at Port Royal, so completely was he reduced by the disorder, that it was found necessary to take him ashore in his cot. As soon as his health permitted he undertook his new command, but, experiencing a relapse, could retain it only for a short time. Towards the end of August, his indisposition had increased to such a degree that he was compelled to solicit leave to return to Europe, as the only means of recovery. He sailed for England in the Lion, of 64 guns, commanded by the

* How much better would it have been to have acted upon the advice of Nelson, and assaulted the place at once, than to have suffered the men to perish by disease. A brave man in an attack knows the risk he runs, and meets it fearlessly; but both seamen and soldiers shrink with apprehension from the thoughts of sickness wasting their strength, and dying by inches. It was too frequently the case, during the war, that military pride overcame the prompt decision of naval men. Had the place been stormed, there would have been less sacrifice of life.—THE OLD SAILOR.

He solicits Employment.

Hon. Captain Cornwallis;* and the kindness and attention of that officer to the patient, both during the voyage and on their arrival in England, were so beneficial to Nelson, that he often afterwards declared that, under Providence, he considered Captain Cornwallis as the second preserver of his life.

On his arrival in England, though barely alive, and almost wholly deprived of the use of his limbs, such was the ardour of his mind for employ, that nothing could prevent him from being immediately carried to the Admiralty and applying for a ship. "This they readily promised me," he jocosely observed soon afterwards to one of his relations, "thinking it not possible for me to live." He then repaired to Bath, where he was at first under the necessity of being carried to the springs and wherever else he wanted to go, and then to use crutches for many weeks. These, however, he threw aside much sooner than his friends at the Admiralty anticipated, though it was nearly three months before he entirely recovered the use of his limbs. On calling to settle with his physician, Dr. Woodward, the smallness of the demand produced a generous alteration between them. "Indeed, Captain Nelson," exclaimed the worthy physician, "you must allow me to follow what I consider to be my professional duty. Your illness has been brought on by serving your king and country; and, believe me, I love both too well to be able to receive any more."†

Immediately on his recovery he hastened to London, and repeated his application for employment; and, after an interval of four months, during which

* Afterwards celebrated for his admirable retreat before a French fleet of a vastly superior force.

† To the honour of the medical profession, this is highly characteristic of their universal generosity under similar circumstances.—THE OLD SAILOR.

Appointed to the Albemarle frigate.

he paid a visit to his father and other relations in Norfolk, he was appointed, in August, 1781, to the Albemarle frigate, of 28 guns. This ship, a captured French merchantman, had been purchased for the king's service, and was a bad sailer, except when going directly before the wind, on which account Nelson always humorously insisted that the French had taught her to run away. Whilst fitting her out, he again became so ill as to be scarcely able to keep from his bed. The service upon which he was ordered was also a trying one for his constitution, debilitated by the effects of a hot climate. He was directed, towards the end of October, in the worst season of the year, to proceed with one or two other vessels to Elsinour, and to convoy home the fleet of merchantmen collected there. This unsuitable appointment is known to have made a deep impression on Nelson's mind, for, in a Memoir of his Life, written by him long afterwards, when mentioning this circumstance, he adds, "and, it would almost be supposed to try my constitution, I was kept the whole winter in the North Sea."

On the 4th of November, he arrived at Elsinour. It was during the period of the armed neutrality entered into by the northern powers from jealousy of Great Britain. When the English vessels anchored off Elsinour, the Danish admiral sent a midshipman on board the Albemarle, desiring to be informed what ships had arrived, and to have their force specified in writing. Nelson, piqued at the slight that seemed to be implied by the mission of an officer of the very lowest rank, replied: "The Albemarle is one of his Britannic Majesty's ships; you are at liberty, sir, to count her guns as you go down the side, and you may assure the Danish admiral that, if necessary, they shall all be well served." In the course of the same month, Captain Dickson, in the Samp-

Sails with a Convoy for Quebec.

son, 64, took the command of the squadron, which, on the 8th of December, left Elsinour with 260 sail of merchantmen, and arrived in safety in Yarmouth Roads. During this voyage Nelson gained a considerable knowledge of that part of the Danish coast and its soundings, which at a later period proved of essential advantage to his country.

On the anchoring of the Albemarle in the Downs, Nelson went on shore to report her arrival to the senior officer. During his absence, there came on so severe a gale that almost all the vessels on that station drove, and the Brilliant, an ordnance store-ship, came athwart-hawse of the Albemarle. Nelson was apprehensive that she would drive on the Goodwin Sands. He hurried to the beach, but such was the violence of the storm, that even the Deal boatmen thought it impossible to get on board. Some of the most daring of them were at length induced by the offer of fifteen guineas to make the attempt. To the astonishment of all the spectators, he embarked during the height of the tempest: and, at the imminent peril of his life, he with great difficulty reached his ship, which had lost her bowsprit and foremast.

As soon as the damages were repaired, Captain Nelson was ordered to Cork for the purpose of sailing with a convoy to Quebec. Though his medical advisers represented the injurious effect which a Canadian winter was likely to have upon his health, and his naval friends urged him to represent his situation to Admiral Keppel, who then presided at the Admiralty, and who would no doubt have changed his destination, he could not be prevailed upon to take this step, conceiving that, as he had received his orders from Lord Sandwich,* it might appear indelicate in him to apply to his successor to alter them. The Albemarle accordingly joined the convoy at Cork,

* Portrait in the Council Room of Greenwich Hospital.

Generosity to the Master of a Fishing Schooner.

and escorted it in safety to the river St. Lawrence, where the fleet arrived on the 2^d of July, 1782.

Two days afterwards the Albemarle sailed on a cruise, and on the 14th captured a fishing schooner belonging to Cape Cod, which had nearly completed her voyage, and which, with her cargo, constituted the whole property of the master. Nelson, having no officer on board who was acquainted with Boston Bay and the adjacent shoals, ordered the master of the schooner on board the Albemarle, to act as her pilot. This man, whose name was Carver, and who had a large family anxiously awaiting his return, instantly obeyed without a murmur, and exerted himself to the utmost to fulfil the orders of his captor. When Nelson had no further occasion for his services, he dismissed him with this address: "You have rendered us a very essential service, and it is not the custom of English seamen to be ungrateful. In the name, therefore, and with the approbation of the officers of this ship, I return your schooner, and with it this certificate of your good conduct. Farewell, and may God bless you!" The certificate was intended to secure him from being captured by any other British ship. Grateful for this generous treatment, Carver afterwards came off at the hazard of his life to the Albemarle, with four sheep, some poultry, and a quantity of vegetables as a present to her captain; and a most valuable one it proved, as the scurvy was raging in the ship: it was the month of August, and the ship's company had not had a single fresh meal since the beginning of April. Though himself and his officers had been living for eight successive weeks on salt beef, he ordered the whole of the American's present to be divided equally among the sick.

Though this cruise proved in its result unprofitable, yet some prizes were taken, and one of considerable

Falls in with a French squadron.

value, but they were lost through the mismanagement of the prize-masters; on one occasion, through the intoxication of the captors, who had made too free with the wine which they found on board. "I do not, however, repine at our loss," he wrote in a letter to Captain Locker; "we have, in other respects, been very fortunate: for on the 14th of August we fell in with, in Boston Bay, four sail of the line and the Iris frigate, part of Monsieur Vaudreuil's squadron, who gave us a pretty dance for nine or ten hours. But we beat them all, except the frigate; and though we brought-to for her, after we were out of sight of the line of battle ships, she tacked and stood from us. Our escape I think wonderful. They were, on the clearing up of a fog, within shot of us, and chased us the whole time, about one point from the wind. The frigate, I fancy, had not forgotten the dressing Captain Salter had given the Amazon for daring to leave the line of battle ships."

Such is his own modest account of this affair; but he might justly have taken to himself the whole merit of this escape. The "pretty dance" which he mentions was led and concluded by himself, with consummate skill and address, among the shoals of St. George's Bank, in Boston Bay, whither the line-of-battle ships were unable to follow, had they even possessed his skill in pilotage. They therefore desisted from the pursuit, though the frigate persevered for some time longer, and had about sun-set approached within little more than gun-shot. At this time, Nelson, overhearing some of his men remark to one another that they thought, as the line-of-battle ships were not following, they should be able to manage the frigate, immediately told his brave fellows, in the most kind and encouraging manner, that he would at least give them an opportunity to try for it. He immediately ordered the

First acquaintance with Mr. Alexander Davison.

main-top sail to be laid to the mast. No sooner did the French frigate perceive her antagonist thus brought-to, for the purpose of engaging, than she suddenly tacked and made all sail to rejoin her consorts.

On the 23^d of August, so many of his crew were daily sinking under the scurvy, that Nelson steered for Quebec. On the 9th of September, the *Albemarle* arrived off the Isle of Bec, in the St. Lawrence, and there procured a pilot. On the morning of the 15th they weighed from Cape Torment, and made sail with light airs through the North Traverse; but it soon fell calm, and the ship drifted among the shoals. The pilot, terrified at her situation, earnestly entreated the captain to return to the anchorage which he had left in the morning. "No," replied Nelson, with his usual decision, "I have a great number of men sick on board; I am bound to Quebec, and there I will go." Upon this the crew turned to, and, having warped the ship through the North Traverse to the utter astonishment of the pilot, anchored on the 17th at Quebec, and sent the sick to the hospital.

It was during his repeated visits to Quebec that Captain Nelson first became acquainted with Mr. Alexander Davison, at whose house he experienced the kindest hospitality, and for whom he conceived the warmest friendship. The sanguine mind of Nelson, indeed, often required the cool and steady reason of a friend to regulate the common occurrences of private life. It is related that, by the interference of Mr. Davison, about this time, he was prevented from contracting a most imprudent marriage. The *Albemarle* being about to quit the station, the Captain had taken leave of his friends and gone down the river to the place of anchorage. Next morning, Mr. Davison, being on the beach, was surprised to see Nelson coming back in his boat. He inquired the

His reason for preferring the West India station.

cause of his return. Nelson took his arm, began to walk towards the town, and confessed that he could not leave Quebec without once more seeing the woman whose society had contributed so much to his happiness, while there, and making her an offer of his hand. His friend dissuaded him from the step, emphatically declaring that his utter ruin must inevitably follow. "Then let it follow!" exclaimed Nelson, "for I am determined to do it."—"And I," rejoined Davison, "am determined that you shall not." The determination of the latter prevailed, and Nelson suffered his friend to lead him back to the boat.

In the month of October, Nelson received orders to convoy a fleet of transports with troops from Quebec to New York—"a very pretty job," says he in the letter last quoted, "at this late season of the year; for our sails are at this moment frozen to the yards." On his arrival at Sandy Hook, he found Lord Hood in the *Barfleur*, 98, with twelve sail of the line, bound to the West Indies. When he waited on Admiral Digby, the commander-in-chief on the New York station, Lord Hood was present, and saw the captain of the *Albemarle* for the first time. "You are come to a fine station for making prize-money," said Admiral Digby. "Yes, sir," replied Nelson, "but the West Indies is the station for honour." He soon afterwards went on board the *Barfleur*, and earnestly requested Lord Hood (appointed to the command in the West Indies) to ask for the *Albemarle*, a favour which was not obtained from Admiral Digby without much difficulty, so sensible were both commanders of his professional merit, even at this early period of his career. It was only by agreeing to leave a ship of nearly double the force instead of the *Albemarle* that Lord Hood carried his point at last.

Prince William Henry (his present Majesty) was then serving as midshipman in the *Barfleur*; the

Personal appearance of Nelson.

description which he has furnished of the appearance of the captain of the *Albemarle*, at this time, is highly amusing. "I had the watch on deck, when Captain Nelson of the *Albemarle* came alongside in his barge: he appeared to be the merest boy of a captain I ever beheld, and his dress was worthy of notice. He had on a full-laced uniform; his lank unpowdered hair was tied in a stiff Hessian tail of extraordinary length; the old-fashioned flaps of his waistcoat added to the general quaintness of his figure, and produced an appearance which particularly attracted my notice, for I had never seen any thing like it before, nor could I imagine who he was or what he came about. My doubts were, however, removed when Lord Hood introduced me to him. There was something so irresistibly pleasing in his address and conversation, and an enthusiasm when speaking on professional subjects, which showed that he was no common being." It was on occasion of this first interview that Lord Hood, on introducing the Prince and Nelson to each other, told his Royal Highness if he wished to ask any questions relative to naval tactics, the captain of the *Albemarle* could give him as much information as any officer in the fleet. "Throughout the whole of the American war," continued the Prince, "the height of Nelson's ambition was to command a line-of-battle ship; as for prize-money, it never entered his thoughts. He had the honour of the king's service, and the independence of the British navy, particularly at heart; and his mind glowed with this idea as much when he was simply captain of the *Albemarle* as when afterwards he was decorated with so much well-earned distinction."

The *Albemarle* sailed with Lord Hood's fleet for the West Indies, on the 22^d of November. On their departure, the French squadron under Vaudreuil left Boston, intending to go to Cape François in St. Do-

Generous treatment of French Officers.

mingo, off which Lord Hood had stationed his fleet. The enemy, being informed of this circumstance, pushed through the Mona passage, and got into Puerto Cavallo, on the coast of the Caraccas. Nelson, being despatched by the British admiral to obtain information of the force and situation of the French, and considering that, as the Albemarle had been a French ship, she might still be taken for one, hoisted the enemy's colours, that he might the better effect the object of his mission. Thus disguised, she fell in, off La Guayra, with a Spanish launch, on board which were several distinguished officers of the French squadron, and, among the rest, the Count of Deuxponts, brother of the late king of Bavaria, who were returning from a visit to the town of Caracca de Leon. Being hailed in French from the frigate, and deceived by her appearance, they went on board: they readily answered all the questions that were asked concerning the number and force of the enemy's squadron. Their astonishment is not to be described when they found themselves prisoners of war on board an English frigate. Nelson, having entertained them with the best that his ship would afford, informed them that they were at liberty to depart whenever they pleased, on their parole of honour to be considered as prisoners of war, if his commander-in-chief should refuse to acquiesce in their liberation, a circumstance which he did not think likely to happen. In return for this generosity, they entreated him to take whatever might be most acceptable from the natural curiosities which they had collected, or whatever else their boat contained; but he declined the offer of any recompence for doing what he felt to be his duty: they parted with mutual good wishes; and Nelson rejoined the commander-in-chief.

That Lord Hood had already formed the highest opinion of his professional abilities is evident from

Returns to England at the Peace.

the following passage in a letter from Nelson to his friend Captain Locker: "My situation in Lord Hood's fleet must be in the highest degree flattering to any young man: he treats me as if I were his son, and will, I am convinced, give me any thing I can ask of him." The return of peace, however, deprived him of any further opportunity of gaining distinction; and, after attending Prince William on a visit to the governor of the Havannah, the Albemarle sailed for England. On the 25th of June the ship anchored at Spithead, and was paid off at Portsmouth on the 3^d of July, 1783.

Captain Nelson immediately went to London, where he made it his first business to attempt to get the wages due to his "good fellows," for various ships in which they had served during the war. "The disgust of the seamen to the navy," he observes in a letter to Captain Locker on this occasion, "is all owing to the infernal plan of turning them over from ship to ship; so that men cannot be attached to their officers, nor their officers care the least about the men. My ship was paid off last week, and in such a manner as must flatter any officer, particularly in these turbulent times: the whole ship's company offered, if I could get a ship, to enter for her immediately. But I have no thoughts of going to sea, for I cannot afford to live on board in such a way as is going on at present." In writing to another friend he says: "I have closed the war without a fortune; but I trust, and from the attention that has been paid to me believe, that there is not a speck in my character. True honour, I hope, predominates in my mind far above riches."

CHAPTER II.

FROM 1783 TO 1790.

CAPTAIN NELSON VISITS FRANCE — APPOINTED TO THE BOREAS — ADVENTURE AT PORTSMOUTH — STATIONED IN THE LEEWARD ISLANDS — ATTENTION TO HIS MIDSHIPMEN — HE EXERTS HIMSELF TO PUT A STOP TO THE TRAFFIC OF THE AMERICANS IN THE WEST INDIES — DIFFICULTIES IN WHICH HIS ZEAL ON THIS OCCASION INVOLVED HIM — LETTERS TO MRS. NISBET — BECOMES SENIOR OFFICER ON THE STATION — IS JOINED BY PRINCE WILLIAM HENRY (HIS PRESENT MAJESTY) — MARRIES — FRAUDS OF OFFICERS OF THE DOCK YARDS, CONTRACTORS AND OTHERS, EXPOSED BY HIM — RETURNS TO ENGLAND — NEGLECT OF HIS SERVICES — DETERMINES TO QUIT THE NAVY — SETTLES AT BURNHAM THORPE, AND MODE OF LIFE THERE.

HAVING been presented by Lord Hood to the King, who he remarked was very attentive, and taken leave at Windsor of Prince William, previously to his departure for the Continent, Nelson now paid another visit to his family and friends in Norfolk. He had expressed a determination to remain unemployed during peace, not only from motives of economy, but from an inclination to indulge the natural independence of his disposition. But the stagnation of an inactive life on shore soon produced that restlessness which forms a peculiar feature in the character of English seamen. He resolved to visit France in company with Captain Macnamara, (the adversary many years afterwards of Colonel Montgomery, in a duel that proved fatal to the latter) that he might acquire a knowledge of the French language, which he had found by experience to be of great service to a naval officer.

Tour in France.

The only account that exists of this tour is contained in his letters to Captain Locker, in the first of which he says: "Sterne's Sentimental Journey is the best description I can give of our tour. Mac advised me to go first to St. Omer, as he had experienced the difficulty of attempting to fix in any place where there are no English. After dinner (at Calais) we set off, intending to go to Montreuil, sixty miles from Calais. They told us we travelled *en poste*, but I am sure we did not get on more than four miles an hour. At Marques we were shown into an inn, they called it—I should have called it a pig-sty. We were put into a room with two straw beds, and with great difficulty they mustered up clean sheets, and gave us two pigeons for supper upon a dirty cloth, and laid wooden-handled knives. O, what a transition from happy England! But we laughed at the repast, and went to bed with a determination that nothing should ruffle our tempers. Having slept very well, we set off at daylight for Boulogne, where we breakfasted: this place was full of English, I suppose, because wine is so very cheap. . . . I determined with Mac's advice to steer for St. Omer, where we arrived last Tuesday. We lodge with a pleasant French family, and have our dinners sent from a *traiteur's*. There are two very agreeable young ladies, daughters, who honour us with their company pretty often; one always makes our breakfast, and the other our tea, and we play a game at cards in the evening: therefore I must learn French, if it is only for the pleasure of talking to them, for they do not speak a word of English."

In his next letter he adverts to the death of his favourite sister, Anne, occasioned by her going out of the ball-room at Bath, when heated with dancing. "My mind," he says, "is too much taken up with the recent account of my dear sister's death to par-

Appointed to the Boreas.

take of any amusements." He adds that, if he should not return to England before the end of the winter, it was his intention to go in the spring to Paris, having received a pressing invitation from the Count of Deuxponts, one of the prisoners whom he had taken off Puerto Cavallo, and of whose rank he was not till then aware, accompanied with the expression of the most grateful acknowledgment for the kind treatment he had experienced on board the Albemarle.

During his residence at St. Omer, the susceptible heart of Nelson was fascinated by the daughter of the Rev. Mr. Andrews, an English clergyman, with whom he had there formed an acquaintance. She was in every respect worthy of his attachment; but, on considering his straitened income, he thought it most prudent to draw back; and to this cause is ascribed his sudden return to England, at the beginning of 1784. He waited on Lord Howe, who then presided at the Admiralty, and who inquired if he wished for employment. He replied that he did, and towards the end of March he was appointed to the Boreas, 28 guns, then lying in Long Reach, destined for the Leeward Islands.

Captain Nelson was directed to carry out Lady Hughes and family to Sir Richard, who commanded on that station; and in this ship his brother William became again, as he had been at school, the companion of the gallant Horatio, embracing this opportunity of visiting the West Indies, and officiating, occasionally, as chaplain, since, owing to the rate of the ship, the Boreas was not entitled to have one appointed. Some of the occurrences which took place after the Boreas had left the river Thames are related in the following letter to Captain Locker, dated Portsmouth, April 21, 1784.

"Since I parted from you, I have encountered many disagreeable adventures. The morning after I

An adventure on horseback.

left you, we sailed at daylight, just after high water. Wednesday I got into a quarrel with a Dutch Indiaman, who had Englishmen on board, which we settled, though with some difficulty. The Dutchman has made a complaint against me; but the Admiralty fortunately have approved of my conduct in the business — a thing they are not very guilty of where there is a likelihood of a scrape. And yesterday, to complete me, I was riding a blackguard horse that ran away with me at Common, carried me round all the works into Portsmouth, by the London gates, through the town, and out at the gate that leads to Common, where there was a waggon in the road, which is so very narrow that a horse could barely pass. To save my legs, and perhaps my life, I was obliged to throw myself from the horse, which I did with great agility; but unluckily upon hard stones, which has hurt my back and my leg, but done no other mischief. It was a thousand to one I had been killed. To crown all, a young girl was riding with me, and her horse ran away with mine; but most fortunately a gallant young man seized her horse's bridle a moment before I was dismounted, and saved her from the destruction which she could not have avoided." Seamen, upon the whole, are notoriously bad horsemen, and we presume from this adventure that in this respect Nelson formed no exception to the general rule.

On the 19th of May, 1784, the *Boreas* sailed for her station, and arrived at Barbadoes on the 26th of June. Here Nelson, to his no small satisfaction, found himself senior captain, and second in command. Though war was his element, yet, as he himself frequently said, "a captain of a man-of-war, if he does his duty, will find sufficient to occupy his mind and to render service to his country, on any station, either in peace or war;" and his conduct in the West In-

Nelson's treatment of his Midshipmen.

dies during a period of profound peace was in perfect accordance with this maxim.

The Boreas carried out an unusual number of young midshipmen, there being not fewer than thirty on board, to whom, probably recollecting the discouraging circumstances attending his own reception on board the *Raisonné*, he showed particular kindness and attention. If any of these youngsters appeared at first afraid to go aloft, he would say to him in a friendly tone: "Come, sir; I am going aloft to the mast-head, and beg that I may meet you there." The boy would immediately set about the task, and climb up in the best manner he could—how, the captain would never notice—and when they met in the top he would speak cheerfully to him, and say that any one was much to be pitied who imagined that it was either dangerous or difficult to get up. He went daily into the school-room to see that they were applying to their nautical studies; and at noon he was always first on deck with his quadrant. Whenever he paid a visit of ceremony, he was accompanied by some of these youths: and when he went to dine with the governor of Barbadoes, he took one of them in his hand, and presented him, saying: "Your excellency must excuse me for bringing one of my midshipmen. I make it a point to introduce them to all the good company I can, as they have few besides myself to look up to whilst they are at sea." It is to be regretted that a practice so manifestly beneficial to the young gentlemen in their professional career is not more generally adopted in the service.*

* To Nelson, the midshipmen in particular were indebted for raising them into that scale of naval society which attached them to the service, and induced the application of all their energies, prompted by the best feeling—a love of country—in the discharge of their duties. One Nelson makes a thousand brave and excellent officers.—THE OLD SAILOR.

Strikes the resident Commissioner's flag at Antigua.

From Barbadoes the *Boreas* proceeded to Antigua, to be laid up for the hurricane months. On his arrival there, he was surprised to find the *Latona* in English Harbour, with a broad pendant hoisted, and still more so on reading an order issued by Sir R. Hughes, directing the commanders of his Majesty's ships to obey the orders of the resident commissioner, Moutray, during their stay there, and authorising the said commissioner to hoist a broad pendant for that purpose on board any ship in the port that he might think proper. As the resident commissioner held only a civil office, Nelson deemed this innovation inconsistent with the good of the service, and determined to resist it. "I know of no superior officers," he exclaimed, "besides the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, and my seniors on the Post list." The moment the ship had anchored, he, with his usual promptitude, sent an order to Captain Sandys, of the *Latona*, to strike the commissioner's broad pendant, and return it to the dock-yard, which was done accordingly: but, to prove that he was actuated only by a sense of duty, he went the same day to dine with the commissioner, and carried him the first intelligence that his pendant had been struck. Sir Richard Hughes transmitted a report of this circumstance to the Admiralty, who could do no other than approve Captain Nelson's conduct.

He displayed not less decision on another occasion. After the hurricane months were over, while the *Boreas* lay at anchor in Nevis road, a French frigate passed to leeward close along shore. According to intelligence received by Nelson, which proved to be correct, this frigate had been sent to make a survey of our West India islands, and had on board two general officers and some engineers. He therefore determined to accompany the French ship to prevent the execution of their intentions. The *Boreas* got

Baffles an intended Survey of the Islands by the French.

under weigh and followed the frigate, which was found the next day at anchor in the road of St. Eustatia. Nelson anchored at about two cables' length on the frigate's quarter. Salutes and other mutual civilities were interchanged. Himself and his officers were on the following day invited by the Dutch governor to meet the French officers at dinner, and Nelson gladly seized this opportunity of assuring the captain of the frigate, with a courtesy worthy of an experienced diplomatist, that, 'understanding it was the design of the French to honour the British West India islands with a visit, he had taken the earliest opportunity in his power to accompany them in his majesty's ship Boreas; in order that such attention might be paid to the officers of his most christian majesty as every Englishman in the islands would be proud of showing.' The French, with equal politeness, would fain have declined the compliment, which Nelson however insisted on paying. They then made several attempts to elude his vigilance, but without effect; on which they abandoned their project; and the frigate returned to Martinique, whence she had originally sailed, the Boreas never losing sight of her till she had reached that island.

His attention was soon afterwards directed to a subject of infinitely greater importance. He observed that our West India Islands swarmed with American vessels, which, taking advantage of the registers issued while Americans were British subjects, were uniformly countenanced by the planters, merchants, and officers of the customs, to the profit of individuals, and the injury of the commerce of the mother country. Nelson was well aware that, after the peace of 1783, the Americans had become as much foreigners to us as any other nation; and, resting on the authority of the Act of 12 Charles II., which says that "no foreigners, directly or indirectly, shall have any

Illicit Traffic of Americans in the West Indies.

trade or intercourse with his majesty's West India Islands; the ships to be British built, and navigated by at least three-fourths British subjects"—he determined to put a stop to their illicit trade. "I, for one," said he, "am determined not to suffer the Yankees to come where my ship is; for, I am sure, if once they are admitted to any kind of intercourse with our islands, the views of the loyalists in settling in Nova Scotia are entirely done away: and, when we are again embroiled in a French war, the Americans will first become the carriers of these colonies, and then have possession of them. Here they come, sell their cargoes for ready money, go to Martinico, buy molasses, and so round and round. The loyalist cannot do this, and consequently must sell a little dearer. The residents here are Americans by connexion and by interest, and are inimical to Great Britain. They are as great rebels as ever were in America, had they the power to show it."

He commenced a correspondence with Sir Thomas Shirley, governor of the Leeward Islands, in which he plainly pointed out the steps that ought to be taken in this business. This unusual mode of giving advice to a superior excited the military jealousy and wounded the pride of the governor. He replied, that 'old generals were not in the habit of taking advice from young gentlemen.' Nelson's indignation was roused in his turn, and produced this emphatic answer: "I have the honour, sir, of being as old as the prime minister of England, and think myself as capable of commanding one of his Majesty's ships as that minister is of governing the State."

In November, 1784, the hurricane months being over, and the squadron having arrived at Barbadoes, the ships were about to separate for the different islands, without any other orders than to examine anchorages, and make the usual inquiries concerning

Nelson's Efforts to prevent the American Traffic.

wood and water. Nelson asked his friend Captain Collingwood, of the *Mediator*, whose sentiments corresponded with his own, to accompany him to the commander-in-chief. He respectfully inquired if they were not to attend to the commerce of their country, and to take care that the British trade was kept in those channels which the navigation-laws pointed out. Sir Richard Hughes replied that he had no particular orders, neither had the Admiralty sent him any acts of parliament. Nelson remarked that this was very singular, as every captain of a man-of-war was furnished with the Statutes of the Admiralty, which included the Navigation Act; that act was directed to admirals, captains, &c. in order to its being carried into execution. Sir Richard said that he had never seen the book. Nelson produced it, and read the laws to him, on which, to use his own words, the admiral "seemed convinced that men-of-war were sent abroad for some other purpose than to be made a show of." Orders were in consequence issued for the enforcement of the Navigation Act.

Accordingly, Captain Nelson, on arriving at his station, St. Kitts, sent away all the Americans, not choosing to seize without due warning, lest it might appear as if a trap had been laid for them. But, in December, to his utter astonishment, he received a communication from the commander-in-chief, stating that he had obtained good advice, agreeably to which he required not only that the Americans should not be prevented from coming in, but should be allowed free egress and regress, if the governor chose to permit it. He enclosed, at the same time, a copy of the orders which he had sent to the governors and presidents of the islands. Some of the latter now took it upon themselves to send letters, nearly equivalent to orders, intimating that Americans would be admitted under certain circumstances,

Nelson's Efforts to prevent the American Traffic.

telling Captain Nelson that Sir Richard had left the matter to them, but that they thought it right to inform him of their determination. These, however, he soon silenced: but with the commander-in-chief he had a much more delicate business. His own account of it, in a letter to Captain Locker, is as follows:—

“I must either disobey my orders or disobey Acts of Parliament. I determined upon the former, trusting to the uprightness of my intentions, and believing that my country would not allow me to be ruined by protecting her commerce. I first sent to Sir Richard, expatiated on the Navigation Law to the best of my ability, told him I was certain some person had been giving him advice, which he would be sorry for having taken, against the positive directions of Acts of Parliament; and that I was certain he had too much regard for the commerce of Great Britain to suffer our worst enemies to take it from us. At a time when Great Britain was straining every nerve to suppress illegal trade at home, which only affected the revenue, I hoped we should not be singular in allowing a much more ruinous traffic to be carried on under the king's flag, and, in short, that I should decline obeying his orders, until I had an opportunity of seeing and talking to him, at the same time making him an apology. At first, I hear, he was going to send an officer to supersede me; but, having mentioned the business to his captain, the latter said, ‘he believed the squadron thought he had sent illegal orders, therefore did not know how far they were obliged to obey them.’ This being their sentiments, he could not try me here, and now he finds I am right, and thanks me for having put him so.

“I told the Custom Houses I should after such a day seize all foreigners I found in our islands, and I

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kept them out to the utmost of my power until that time. The Custom Houses fancied I could not seize without a deputation, therefore disregarded my threats. In May last I seized the first. I had the governor, the customs, all the planters, upon me; subscriptions were soon filled to prosecute me, and my admiral stood neuter, though his flag was then in the roads. Before the first vessel was tried, I had seized four others; and, having sent for the masters on board to examine them, and the marines on board the vessels not allowing some of these masters to go on shore, I had suits taken out against me, and damages laid at the enormous sum of £40,000 sterling. When the trial came on, I was protected by the judge for the day; but the marshal was desired to arrest me, and the merchants promised to indemnify him for the act. The judge, however, having declared he would send him to prison if he dared to do it, he desisted. I fortunately attached myself to an honest lawyer; and, don't let me forget, the President of Nevis offered in court to become my bail for £10,000 if I chose to suffer the arrest: he told them I had only done my duty, and, although he suffered more in proportion than any of them, he could not blame me. At last, after a trial of two days, we carried our cause, and the vessels were condemned. I was a close prisoner on board for eight weeks: for, had I been taken, I most assuredly should have been cast for the whole sum. I had nothing left but to send a memorial to the king, and he was good enough to order me to be defended at his expence, and sent orders to General Shirley to afford me every assistance in the execution of my duty; referring him to my letters, as there was contained in them what concerned him not to have suffered.

“The Treasury, by the last packet, transmitted thanks to Sir Richard Hughes and the officers under

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him, for their activity and zeal in protecting the commerce of Great Britain. Had they known what I have told you, and if my friends think I may without impropriety tell the story myself, I shall do it when I get home, I do not think they would have bestowed thanks in that quarter and neglected me. I feel much hurt that, after the loss of health and risk of fortune, another should be thanked for what I did, and against his orders. I either deserved to be sent out of the service, or at least to have had some little notice taken of what I had done. They have thought it worthy of notice, and yet have neglected me. But I have done my duty, and have nothing to accuse myself of."

It may be right to add a few particulars connected with this affair, not given by Nelson himself in the preceding narrative. It was on the arrival of the *Boreas* at Nevis, in 1785, that he seized the four American ships, which he found there deeply laden, and with what are called the island colours flying — white, with a red cross. These vessels were immediately visited, and the masters were directed, as they were known to be Americans and to have American cargoes on board, to hoist their proper colours, and leave the island within forty-eight hours. They denied being Americans, and refused to obey the order; upon which an examination of their crews took place, on board the *Boreas*, in the captain's cabin, before the Judge of the Admiralty, who happened to be in the ship; when they all confessed that they were Americans, and that their vessels and cargoes were wholly American property.

After the trial, which terminated in the condemnation of the vessels, when the American masters went on shore, they were questioned, by an attorney, provided by the cabal in league against Nelson, respecting the place and manner in which the depositions

His Suggestions give rise to the Register Act.

had been taken by him. Instigated by this attorney, they declared that they had given their depositions under the influence of bodily fear, for a man with a drawn sword—the sentry placed as usual at the cabin-door—had stood over them during the whole proceeding. On this ridiculous pretence it was that the action for damages was commenced against Nelson, which, as he says, confined him to his cabin for many weeks, Sundays excepted; as the damages were laid at such a sum that, had he been arrested, it would have been impossible for him to find bail. The marshal frequently came on board for the purpose, but, by the address of his first lieutenant, Mr. Wallis, Nelson was enabled to elude his vigilance. While confined to his ship by this shameful prosecution, one of his indignant officers happened when in conversation on the subject to use the word *pity*. “Pity!” exclaimed the Captain—“pity, did you say? I shall live, sir, to be envied; and to that point I shall always direct my course.”

Besides addressing the memorial mentioned above to the King, he represented the whole of these transactions, and the conduct of the officers of the revenue in the West India islands, to the secretary of state, suggesting to him the only mode that could be adopted to remove every shadow of pretence for the intercourse of Americans with those islands, to the prejudice of British subjects, as well as the authority that should be given to the officers of the navy, to seize all illicit traders, without being deputed by the officers of the customs and the excise. The step which he recommended was to change the registers of all vessels; and he proposed many other improvements and regulations connected with our West India trade, which were embodied in the act passed in 1786, and commonly called the Register Act, the judicious restrictions of which have materially con-

Nelson's first Acquaintance with Mrs. Nisbet.

tributed to our naval superiority. By this act it was among other things ordained that, after the first day of August, 1786, no vessel should be accounted British, unless she were built in the British dominions, or taken as a prize. Every vessel was ordered to have her name, with that of the port to which she belonged, conspicuously painted on her stern; and a register to be taken out, wherein, among other things, should be mentioned the names of the owners, who were all to reside in the British dominions, unless some of them were members of British factories abroad. No ship built in the United States of America, during the existence of any prohibitory acts, was entitled to be registered, unless an especial order to the contrary was issued by the privy council, in consequence of services rendered to the public by its owners. The whole of this act, (entitled an Act for the further Increase and Encouragement of Shipping and Navigation) originating in the zeal and judgment of Captain Nelson, in this early period of his career, claims the particular attention of every officer in the British Navy.

It was during this harassing business that Nelson became acquainted with Mrs. Nisbet, the accomplished widow of Dr. Nisbet, physician to the island of Nevis, who died before she had completed her eighteenth year, leaving her one child, a boy, named Josiah, at this time nine years old. She was the niece of Nelson's friend, Mr. Herbert, the president of Nevis, and was absent at St. Kitts when he paid his first visit to her uncle, in 1784. On this occasion a female friend gave her the following account of him:—
“ We have at last seen the little captain of the *Boreas*, of whom so much has been said. He came up just before dinner, much heated, and was very silent, yet seemed, according to the old adage, to think the more. He declined drinking any wine; but, after

Nelson's first Acquaintance with Mrs. Nisbet.

dinner, when the president gave, as usual, the three toasts, 'the King,' 'the Queen, and Royal Family,' and 'Lord Hood,' this strange man regularly filled his glass, and observed that those were always bumper toasts with him: which having drunk, he uniformly passed the bottle and relapsed into his former taciturnity. It was impossible during this visit for any of us to make out his real character; there was such a reserve and sternness in his behaviour, with occasional sallies, though very transient, of a superior mind. Being placed by him, I endeavoured to rouse his attention by showing him all the civilities in my power; but I drew out little more than yes and no. If you, Fanny, had been there, we think you would have made something of him; for you have been in the habit of attending to these odd sort of people."

It was probably about the same time that one day, when Nelson had called on Mr. Herbert, that gentleman immediately after his departure exclaimed: "Good God! if I did not find that great little man, of whom every body is so much afraid, playing in the next room, under the dining-table, with Mrs. Nisbet's child." Every body knows that the readiest way to gain the good-will of a mother is to show a fondness for her child: and so it proved in the present instance; for a few days afterwards, when Mrs. Nisbet was introduced to the captain, and thanked him for his attentions to her little boy, her engaging manners made such an impression on the susceptible heart of Nelson, as gradually to produce a strong and disinterested attachment. And how admirably are his feelings expressed in his letters to the lady! In one of them he says:—"I have received a letter from Mr. Herbert, in answer to that which I left at Nevis for him. My greatest wish is to be united to you; and the foundation of all conjugal happiness, real love and esteem, is I trust what

Correspondence with Mrs. Nisbet.

you believe I possess in the strongest degree towards you. I think Mr. Herbert loves you too well not to let you marry the man of your choice, although he may not be so rich as some others, provided his character and situation in life render such a union eligible. I declare solemnly that, did I not conceive I had the full possession of your heart, no consideration should make me accept your hand. We know that riches do not always insure happiness; and the world is convinced that I am superior to pecuniary considerations in my public and private life, as, in both instances, I might have been rich."

"Separated from you," he writes on another occasion, "what pleasure can I feel?—none, be assured. Every day, hour, and act, convinces me of it. With my heart filled with the purest affection, do I write this; for, were it not so, you know me well enough to be certain that, even at this moment, I would tell you of it. I daily thank God, who ordained that I should be attached to you. He has, I firmly believe, intended it as a blessing to me, and I am well convinced you will not disappoint his beneficent intentions. Fortune, that is, money, is the only thing I regret the want of, and that only for the sake of my affectionate Fanny. But the Almighty, who brings us together, will, I doubt not, take ample care of us, and prosper all our undertakings. No dangers shall deter me from pursuing every honourable means of providing handsomely for you and your's; and again let me repeat, that my dear Josiah shall ever be considered by me as one of my own. That omnipotent Being, who sees and knows what passes in all hearts, knows what I have written to be my undisguised sentiments towards the little fellow."

Again he writes: "Had I not seized any Americans I should now have been with you: but I should have neglected my duty, which I think your regard

Correspondence with Mrs. Nisbet.

for me is too great for you to have wished me to have done. Duty is the great business of a sea-officer. All private considerations must give way to it, however painful it may be. I trust that time will not have lessened me in the opinion of her whom it shall be the business of my future life to make happy."

The following extract of a letter from Antigua is too characteristic to be omitted:—"To write letters to you is the next greatest pleasure I feel to receiving them from you. What I experience when I read such as I am sure are the pure sentiments of your heart, my poor pen cannot express; nor, indeed, would I give much for any pen or head that could describe feelings of that kind: they are worth but little when that can happen. My heart yearns to you; it is with you; my mind dwells on nought else but you. Absent from you, I feel no pleasure; it is you, dearest Fanny, who are every thing to me. Without you I care not for this world: for I have found lately nothing in it but vexation and trouble. These, you are well convinced, are my present sentiments. God Almighty grant they may never change! Nor do I think they will: indeed, there is, as far as human knowledge can judge, a moral certainty they cannot; for it must be real affection that brings us together, not interest or compulsion, which makes so many unhappy. As you begin to know something about sailors, have you not often heard that salt water and absence always wash away love? Now, I am such a heretic as not to believe that faith; for behold, every morning, since my arrival, I have had six buckets of salt water at daylight poured upon my head, and, instead of finding what the seamen say to be true, I perceive the contrary effect; and if it goes on so contrary to the prescription, you must see me before my fixed time. At first I bore absence toler-

Nelson becomes Senior Officer on the Leeward Island Station.

ably, but now it is almost insupportable; and, by and by, I expect it will be quite so. But patience is a virtue, and I must exercise it on this occasion, whatever it costs my feelings. I am alone in the commanding officer's house while my ship is fitting, and from sunset until bedtime I have not a human creature to speak to: you will feel a little for me, I think. I did not use to be over fond of sitting alone. The moment old Boreas is habitable in my cabin, I shall fly to it to avoid mosquitoes and melancholies."

About a month before this last letter was written, in July, 1786, Nelson had become the senior officer on the Leeward Island station, in consequence of the recall of Sir Richard Hughes. In a letter to Captain Locker, dated September 27, he says:—"I have been since June so very ill, until lately, that I have only a faint recollection of any thing which I did. My complaint was in my breast, such a one as I had going out to Jamaica. The doctors thought I was in a consumption, and gave me quite up; but that Great Being, who has so often raised me from the sick bed, has once more restored me, and to that health which I very seldom enjoy."

In November he was joined at Antigua by his old friend Prince William Henry, captain of the Pegasus. Their friendship had been kept up by an occasional correspondence; and, during the time that the Prince remained under Nelson's command, from November, 1786, till the spring of the following year, when he went to Jamaica, his Royal Highness and Captain Nelson dined with each other alternately. His Majesty has been heard to declare that it was this period which first formed his character as a naval officer; and it was employed in a manner highly gratifying to his feelings. "It was then," he added, "that I particularly observed the greatness of Nelson's superior mind. The manner in which

His Intercourse with Prince William Henry.

he enforced the spirit of the Navigation Act first drew my attention to the commercial interests of my country. We visited the different islands together, and as much as the manœuvres of fleets can be described off the head-lands of islands, we fought over again the principal naval actions in the American war. Excepting the naval tuition which I received on board the Prince George, when Admiral Sir R. G. Keats was lieutenant of her, and for whom both of us equally entertained a sincere regard, my mind took its first decided naval turn from this familiar intercourse with Nelson."

In a letter to Captain Locker, Nelson thus expresses his opinion of the Prince:—"You must have heard long before this reaches you that Prince William is under my command. I shall endeavour to take care that he is not a loser by that circumstance. He has his foibles, as well as private men, but they are far overbalanced by his virtues. In his professional line he is superior to near two-thirds, I am sure, of the list; and, in attention to orders and respect to his superior officer, I hardly know his equal—this is what I have found him."

On the first day of 1787, he thus writes to Mrs. Nisbet. "What is it to attend on princes! let me attend on you and I am satisfied. Some are born for attendants on great men; I rather think that is not my particular province. His Royal Highness often tells me he believes I am married, for he never saw a lover so easy, or say so little of the object he has a regard for. When I tell him I certainly am not, he says, then he is sure I must have a great esteem for you, and that it is not what is vulgarly—I do not much like the use of that word—called love. He is right; my love is founded on esteem, the only foundation that can make the passion last. I need not tell you what you so well know, that I

Nelson's Marriage.

wish I had a fortune to settle on you ; but I trust I have a good name, and that certain events will bring the other thing about: it is my misfortune, not my fault. You can marry me only from a sincere affection; therefore I ought to make you a good husband, and I hope it will turn out that I shall."

At length, on the 11th of March, 1787, Captain Nelson was married at Nevis, in a very private manner, to Mrs. Nisbet; his friend, Prince William Henry, giving away the bride. It is a singular fact that there were professional men who felt severe disappointment at this event, fearing lest it should abate his spirit of enterprise and patriotism, from which they had formed the highest anticipations of his future eminence. Thus, Captain Pringle, meeting one of the commodore's officers, on the day after his marriage, remarked: "The navy yesterday lost one of its greatest ornaments by Nelson's marriage. It is a national loss that such an officer should marry: had it not been for that circumstance, I foresaw that Nelson would become the greatest man in the service." If Captain Pringle was not aware of Nelson's strict notions of duty, which, as we have seen, was with him paramount to every other consideration, yet time proved the accuracy of the opinion which he had formed of his character.

About this time, Mr. Herbert was so displeased with his only daughter, that he had resolved to disinherit her, and to leave his whole fortune, which was very great, to his niece. Nelson, however, generously used all his influence to prevent this injustice, though he would have been a gainer by it, and did not rest till he had effected a complete reconciliation between the President and his child.

In a letter to Captain Locker, written about ten days after his marriage, he says: "My time since

Nelson exposes Abuses in the Civil Service of the Navy.

November has been entirely taken up in attending the Prince on his tour round these islands. However, except Granada, this is the last; when I shall repair to English Harbour, and fit the Boreas for a voyage to England. Happy shall I be when that time arrives. No man has had more illness or trouble on a station than I have experienced; but let me lay a balance on the other side — I am married to an amiable woman, that far makes amends for every thing. Indeed, until I married her, I never knew happiness; and I am morally certain she will continue to make me a happy man for the rest of my days. Prince William did me the honour to stand her father on the occasion; and has shown every act of kindness that the most sincere friendship could bestow. His Royal Highness leaves this country in June, by which time I hope my orders will arrive, or that somebody will be appointed to the command. The wonder to me is that any independent man will accept it, for there is nothing pleasant to be got by it."

During the latter part of his stay on this station, the indefatigable mind of Nelson was directed to the scandalous practices of the officers of the dock-yard at Antigua, and of the contractors, prize-agents, and others in the civil service of the navy in the West Indies generally. When he became senior officer, and bills for goods purchased for the navy were brought to him for his signature, he desired to be furnished with the original vouchers, to ascertain whether the goods in question had been purchased at the market price: but he was told that it was not customary to produce vouchers. He then wrote to the comptroller of the navy, representing the abuses to which such a practice was likely to lead; but the answer which he received seemed to intimate that the old forms were deemed quite sufficient. Soon afterwards he received positive information of very

Nelson exposes Abuses in the Civil Service of the Navy.

extensive frauds committed upon the government. The informers were two merchants of Antigua, one of whom had held official situations in several of the islands; and the only reward they desired was a certain per-centage upon the sums that might be recovered. "These gentlemen," Nelson thus wrote to the Duke of Richmond, then at the head of the ordnance department, "are not publishers of this fraud merely for the honour of serving the public: interest has its weight. I send you an account of one quarter's fraud, and I examined several in the books; but they declined my having more, until they were satisfied government would reward them in proportion to the frauds discovered. As a man who has more than once stood forward to detect and bring to punishment those who are guilty of defrauding the public, I may venture to express myself freely. In Antigua, in the different departments, at least, they say, £300,000: at St. Lucie, as much; at Barbadoes, not far short; and at Jamaica, upwards of a million. What of this may be recovered, if any, I know not: however, this good effect it surely will have, that of preventing the like in future. But there is one observation which I beg leave to make. It will be said, 'vouchers are produced, and merchants have attested that they are at the market price.' In this country the market price is what an article will sell for, and there is no merchant here but will declare that, in signing vouchers for each other, they never look at the article, saying, 'A thing is always worth what it will bring;' therefore vouchers are no check in this country."

Before this business could be thoroughly sifted, Nelson's term of service on the Leeward Island station expired; and in June, 1787, he sailed for England. During the three years that he had commanded the *Boreas* in the West Indies, not an officer or man

Returns to England.

of her crew had died — a circumstance probably not to be paralleled in such a climate. His attention to the health of his people was, indeed, unremitting. He never suffered the ship to remain many days at any island. The *Boreas* was always on the wing, and, when other ships happened to be in company, Nelson was continually forming the line, exercising the men, and chasing. In the hurricane months, which obliged him to remain at anchor in English Harbour, Antigua, he encouraged music, dancing, and single-stick, on board; and the officers, especially the younger ones, performed plays. These recreations served to keep up the spirits of the ship's company, by furnishing constant employment for their minds.

His first step on his arrival in England was to prosecute the affair of the peculations in the West Indies, and though Nelson had eventually the satisfaction of knowing that he had put the investigation into a proper course, which ended in the detection and punishment of some of the parties, and seeing that all his representations were attended to, and that every step which he recommended was adopted, still his own efforts were suffered to pass without reward, or even mark of commendation. Indeed, from a letter which he addressed to Lord Howe, they seem to have been entirely overlooked. "I had hopes," he says, "that the Admiralty would have ordered me the same allowance at least as was given to a junior officer left in the command at Jamaica; and I hope your lordship will give me countenance in an application for it. I trust it is incontrovertible that I did my duty with the most rigid exactness, and that the business of the naval yard was never paid more attention to than by myself. The navy board, I am sure, at this moment, must know that the difficulties said by their officers to be thrown in the way of

The *Boreas* stationed at the Nore.

their duty by me, arose only from my close investigation of their conduct, which prevented their impositions from taking effect. Every artificer and seaman employed in the naval yard receives additional pay : and shall the officer who has the conducting of the whole business be the only one, in this instance, who is neglected? I trust in your lordship's answer it will not prove so. The trouble I was at in developing those frauds, it is most true, was no more than my duty : but, indeed, my lord, I little thought that the expences attending my going so often to St. John's, a distance of twelve miles, would have fallen upon my pay as captain of the *Boreas*."

With reference to this very subject, it has been well remarked, that it is not so much the honours that are at length liberally bestowed upon officers who are worn out in the service, which preserve a spirit of heroism and enterprize in our navy, as an attention to humble individuals, who, like Nelson, have only their integrity and zeal to bring them into notice, and whose valour has been disciplined in the rigid school of adversity.

As if to sharpen the feelings of disappointment which Nelson must have experienced on this occasion, the *Boreas*, immediately on her return from the West Indies, was actually kept at the Nore as a slop and receiving ship till the end of November. It is well known that Nelson deeply resented this indignity : indeed so keenly did he feel the unpleasant service imposed upon him, that, during this whole time, he seldom or never quitted his ship, or associated with his officers, carrying on the duty with stern and sullen attention. Orders were at length received to prepare the *Boreas* to be paid off. He expressed his joy at the circumstance to the senior officer commanding in the *Medway*, "which," he added with much emotion, "will release me for ever

Nelson visits the West of England.

from an ungrateful service; as it is my firm and unalterable determination never again to set foot in a king's ship. On my arrival in town, I shall immediately wait on the first lord of the Admiralty, and resign my commission." Arguments and expostulations were urged in vain to dissuade him from such a step; on which the officer, without loss of time, secretly employed his friendly interference with Lord Howe, and so successfully, that, on the 29th of November, the day before the *Boreas* was paid off, Captain Nelson received a kind letter from his lordship, intimating his wish to see him on his arrival in town. Nelson waited upon him accordingly, and was graciously received. The result of the interview proved satisfactory to both parties, and on the next levee-day Lord Howe presented him to his Majesty.

The health of Captain Nelson was at this time in a very precarious state. Dreading the effects of an English winter after so long a residence in the West Indies, he resolved to visit Bath, where he had himself formerly experienced great benefit, and where his father's infirmities had induced him to spend the winter, during many of the later years of his life. From Bath he proceeded with his wife to an uncle of her's near Bristol, and then to Exmouth. During his stay at the latter place, he paid a visit to Prince William Henry at Plymouth; and there also in May, 1788, he thus wrote to a friend: "You have given up all the toils and anxieties of business, whilst I must still buffet the waves—in search of what? Alas! that thing called honour is now thought of no more. My integrity cannot, I hope, be amended; but my fortune, God knows, has grown worse for the service: so much for serving my country. But the devil, ever willing to tempt the virtuous—pardon this flattery of myself—has made me offer, if any ships should be sent to destroy his majesty of

Settles at Burnham Thorpe.

Morocco's ports, to be there; and I have some reason to think that, should any more come of it, my humble services will be accepted. I have invariably laid down and followed close a plan of what ought to be uppermost in the breast of an officer — that it is much better to serve an ungrateful country than to give up his own fame. Posterity will do him justice. A uniform course of integrity seldom fails of bringing a man to the goal of fame at last."

On leaving the beautiful scenery of Exmouth, Captain and Mrs. Nelson passed through town on their way to the parsonage of Burnham Thorpe, which he never could speak of, when absent from it, without being affected. They had no thoughts of residing there, but merely intended to pay a visit to his father, preparatory to going to France, where he purposed to make himself better acquainted with the French language — an acquisition of essential utility to a naval officer. So overjoyed was the venerable rector at the sight of them, that he declared it had given him new life. "But, Horace," exclaimed his father, "it would have been better that I had not been thus cheered, if I am to be so soon bereft of you again. Let me, my good son, see you while I can; age and infirmities increase, and I shall not last long." This appeal was irresistible; and Nelson and his wife took up their abode at the parsonage.

Though so far removed from his proper element and sphere of action, his mind, even in the quiet village of Burnham Thorpe, could not remain unoccupied. He was soon assiduously engaged in cultivating his father's garden, and in learning to farm the adjoining glebe: but the former was his favourite station. There he would often spend the greater part of the day, and dig, as if for the sake of wearying himself. At other times he would resume the pursuits of early youth, and, with a simplicity peculiar

Nelson's rural Occupations.

to him, when not engaged with the great objects of professional duty, would ramble for hours in the woods seeking birds' nests, accompanied, at his express desire, by Mrs. Nelson. Sometimes too he employed himself, when his eyes would admit of it, in reading, especially periodical works, in studying charts, and in writing, or drawing plans. Known and beloved by all the neighbouring gentry, he frequently joined in their field sports, and was particularly fond of coursing. In pointing a great gun at a ship, a castle, or a fort, he was scarcely to be equalled, and so universally was this talent known, that, ever after the expedition against San Juan, he was familiarly called the Brigadier. But he could make nothing of a hare, a partridge, or a pheasant. Carrying his fowling-piece at full cock, as though about to board an enemy, he let fly at a bird the moment it rose, without ever putting the gun to his shoulder; hence his having once killed a partridge is remembered by his family as a remarkable circumstance. Meanwhile, he acted the part of a true father to the little Josiah, whom he treated in every respect with the most indulgent tenderness. He had him carefully educated, and himself minutely inspected his progress. As he seemed early to evince a partiality for the naval service, Nelson, who had no prospect of issue by his wife, promised to take him as an only son under his own immediate protection.

Even in his retreat at Burnham, he was not destined to enjoy undisturbed quiet. He was again menaced with prosecutions by the Americans, whose ships he had seized in the West Indies. "I have written them word," he tells Captain Locker, "that I will have nothing to do with them, and they must act as they think proper. Government will, I suppose, do what is right, and not leave me in the lurch. We have heard enough lately of the consequence of

His last Annoyance from the American Captains.

the Act of Navigation to this country. They may take my person; but if sixpence would save me from a prosecution I would not give it."

It was at this time that he had one day gone to a neighbouring fair to buy a pony. During his absence two men abruptly entered the parsonage, and asked for Captain Nelson. Being informed that he had gone out, but that Mrs. Nelson was at home, they desired to see her. Having made her repeatedly declare that she was really and truly the captain's wife, they served her with a writ on the part of the American captains, who had laid their damages at £20,000, desiring her to give it to her husband on his return. Nelson, having bought his pony, came home with it in high glee. He called out his wife to admire his bargain, and began to enumerate all its excellent qualities, so that it was some time before she could apprise him of what had happened, and put the paper into his hand. His indignation was unbounded. "This affront," he exclaimed, "I did not deserve; but never mind — I'll be trifled with no longer. I will write immediately to the Treasury, and if government will not support me, I am resolved to leave the country." He accordingly wrote to communicate the circumstance to the Treasury, adding that, unless a satisfactory answer were sent by return of post, he should take refuge in France. His plan was arranged with his usual promptness; and it was settled that his elder brother Maurice should accompany Mrs. Nelson to the continent ten days after his departure. Fortunately for his country, a favourable answer was received, purporting that 'Captain Nelson was a very good officer, and needed be under no apprehension, for he would assuredly be supported by the Treasury.' This determination of government relieved him from all further annoyance on this subject.

CHAPTER III.

FROM 1790 TO 1795.

NELSON'S REPEATED AND FRUITLESS APPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT — HE IS COMMISSIONED TO THE AGAMEMNON — HIS INSTRUCTIONS TO A MIDSHIPMAN — PROCEEDS TO THE MEDITERRANEAN UNDER LORD HOOD — GOES TO NAPLES WITH DESPACHES — HIS FIRST INTRODUCTION TO SIR WILLIAM AND LADY HAMILTON — ORDERED TO JOIN COM-MODORE LINZEE — ENGAGES A SQUADRON OF FRENCH FRIGATES — IS SENT TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE BEY OF TUNIS — STATE OF AFFAIRS IN CORSICA — LORD HOOD DETERMINES TO ASSIST THE CORSICANS IN EXPELLING THE FRENCH — NELSON COMMANDS THE SEAMEN EMPLOYED IN THE SIEGE OF BASTIA — THE SQUADRON SAILS IN QUEST OF THE FRENCH FLEET — SIEGE OF CALVI — NELSON LOSES THE SIGHT OF HIS RIGHT EYE — HIS SERVICES NOT REWARDED — ADMIRABLE SPIRIT OF HIS CREW.

NELSON had passed two years in retirement, during which he had in vain sought professional employment, when, in 1790, the dispute with Spain relative to Nootka Sound encouraged him to renew his offers of service in the armament equipped on the occasion. Though his claims to notice were supported by the recommendation of his steady friend, Prince William Henry, to Lord Chatham, who was then at the head of the Admiralty, they failed to produce the desired effect; and the disappointment which he experienced in consequence so preyed upon his feelings, that, but for the urgent remonstrances of Lord Hood, it is likely he would have retired for ever from the service. Perhaps, however, he had reason to congratulate himself on not having obtained an appointment at that time, as the speedy adjustment of the differ-

Nelson's Applications for Employment.

ences with Spain spared the heavy expence which he must have incurred to no purpose for his equipment.

Hearing, in the autumn of the same year, that the *Raisonnable*, the ship in which he had commenced his naval career, was to be commissioned, he applied for the command of her, but with no better success than before. In the course of the years 1791 and 1792, he renewed his earnest applications to the Admiralty, that they would not suffer him to rust in indolence; but, finding every attempt ineffectual, he began to despair of ever being again employed. Towards the conclusion of 1792, when the events of the revolution in France threatened a rupture with the new Republic, he thus wrote to Prince William Henry, then Duke of Clarence:—"Your Royal Highness will not, I trust, deem it improper, although I have no doubt it will be thought unnecessary at this time, to renew my expressions of invariable attachment not only to your Royal Highness, but to my king; for I think that very soon every individual will be called forth to show himself, if I may judge from this county, [Norfolk] where societies are formed and forming on principles certainly inimical to our present constitution both in church and state. In what way it might be in the power of such an humble individual as myself best to serve my king, has been matter of serious consideration, and no mode appeared to me so proper as asking for a ship. Accordingly, on Saturday last, Lord Chatham received my letter desiring the command of one. Still, as I have hitherto been disappointed in all my applications to his lordship, I can hardly expect any answer to my letter, which has always been the way in which I have been treated. But, neither on sea nor on shore, can my attachment to my king be shaken. It will never end but with my life."

Appointed to the *Agamemnon*.

In December, 1792, determined that, if he failed, it should not be for want of perseverance, he once more addressed the Board, and, after earnestly soliciting the command of a ship, he added—"Or, if their lordships should be pleased to appoint me to a cockle-boat, I shall feel grateful." On the 12th of December the secretary returned this answer, in the usual official form:—"Sir, I have received your letter of the 5th instant, expressing your readiness to serve, and I have read the same to my lords commissioners of the Admiralty." Surely these repeated disappointments endured by the humble and apparently forgotten tenant of the parsonage of Burnham Thorpe, and the change made in a few short years in his prospects and condition, ought to furnish a useful lesson of patience to young professional men, and to warn them, even under the most untoward circumstances, against yielding to despair.

At length, however, "*post nubila Phæbus* — after clouds comes sunshine —" so he wrote to his wife under the date of January 7, 1793. "The Admiralty so smile upon me, that really I am as much surprised as when they frowned. Lord Chatham yesterday made many apologies, for not having given me a ship before this time, and said that, if I chose to take a 64 to begin with, I should be appointed to one as soon as she was ready; and, whenever it was in his power, I should be removed into a 74." This change was due to the exertions of the Duke of Clarence, in which he was seconded by Lord Hood, and to the declaration of war by France. On the 30th of January his commission to the *Agamemnon*, 64,* was

* The *Agamemnon*, or, as she was humorously styled by the seamen, the "Old Eggs-and-Bacon," was wrecked when under the command of Captain Rose in Maldonado Bay, in the river Plate. This happened on the 20th of June, in the year 1809. Many of Nelson's hardy tars were still on board

Instructions to a Midshipman.

signed, and on the 7th of the following month he joined his ship, which was then at Chatham, equipping for the Mediterranean.

His ship's company was soon raised, chiefly from Norfolk and Suffolk, and not a few from his own immediate neighbourhood. So universally was he esteemed, and such was even then the high opinion entertained of his conduct and abilities, that many gentlemen of his own county were anxious to place their sons under his command: and it must be admitted that if they wished them to obtain an insight into the profession, founded on practice and example, they could not have selected a fitter master. Among those who obtained this favour, may be mentioned the Rev. Mr. Bolton, whose brother had married Nelson's eldest sister, the Rev. Mr. Wetherhead, and the Rev. Mr. Hoste. He also took his step-son, young Josiah Nesbit, from school, equipped him as a midshipman, and carried him on board the *Agamemnon*. "There are three things, young gentleman," said Captain Nelson, addressing one of these youths, whose father he knew to be a staunch Whig, "which you are constantly to bear in mind. First, you must always implicitly obey orders, without attempting to form any opinion of your own respecting their propriety; secondly, you must consider every man as your enemy who speaks ill of your king; and thirdly, you must hate a Frenchman as you do the devil."

It was not till the middle of May that the *Agamemnon*

of her; and I well remember witnessing the distress pictured on many a furrowed countenance, as they were compelled to quit a ship so powerfully endeared to them by old associations. The address of Captain Rose, previously to their being distributed amongst the fleet, (under Admiral de Courcy) drew tears from many an eye that had looked undismayed at danger, even when death appeared inevitable.—THE OLD SAILOR.

Employed in the Blockade of Marseilles and Toulon.

memnon sailed, in company with four other ships of the line and two frigates, for the Mediterranean station, under the command of Lord Hood, who followed with the rest of the fleet before the end of the month. In June the *Agamemnon* was one of six sail of the line which put into Cadiz to water, on which occasion he wrote that the Spaniards were very civil to them. He speaks of their ships as being very fine, but shockingly manned; and adds, "I am certain if our six barges' crews, who are picked men, had got on board one of their first rates, they would have taken her. The Dons may make fine ships, they cannot, however, make men." Writing in August to the Duke of Clarence, he says, that two Spanish frigates had brought news that the French were providing their ships with forges, for shot. "This, if true," he observes, "would have been as well kept secret; but, as it is known, we must take care to get so close that their red-hots may go through both sides, when it will not matter whether they are hot or cold." At a later date, he writes: "The fleet has received orders to consider Marseilles and Toulon as invested, and to take all vessels of whatever nation, bound to those ports. This has pleased us; if we make these red-hot gentlemen hungry, they may be induced to come out."

In the same month he writes to Mrs. Nelson:—"Whether the French intend to come out seems uncertain; they have a force equal to us. Our Jacks would be very happy to see it; and, as our fleet is in the fullest health, I dare say we should give a good account of them. How I long to hear from you!—next to being with you, it is the greatest pleasure I can receive. The being united to such a good woman I look back to as the happiest period of my life; and, as I cannot here show my affection to you, I do it doubly to Josiah, who deserves it as well on

Sent to Naples with Despatches.

his own account as on your's, for he is a real good boy, and most affectionately loves me. Lord Hood has sent to offer me a 74, but I have declined it; as the Admiralty chose to put me into a 64, there I stay. I cannot give up my officers."

At this time, the south of France seemed disposed to the restoration of monarchical government, and commissioners were sent by Marseilles and Toulon to Lord Hood to treat on the subject. During this negotiation, which ended in the surrender of Toulon to the British squadron, Captain Nelson was sent to Naples with despatches for Sir William Hamilton, our envoy at the court of the Two Sicilies. The object of these despatches was to apply for troops to assist in garrisoning and keeping possession of Toulon. After his first interview with Captain Nelson, the ambassador told his lady that he was going to introduce to her a little man, who could not boast of being very handsome; "but," added he, in the spirit of true prophecy, "this man, who is an English naval officer, will become the greatest man that England ever produced. I know it from the few words I have already exchanged with him. I pronounce that he will one day astonish the world. I have never entertained any officer at my house, but I am determined to bring him here. Let him be put in the room prepared for Prince Augustus," (the Duke of Sussex). Such was the commencement of that acquaintance which, at a later period, weaned Nelson's affections from the wife, to whom he had been so strongly attached, and undermined his domestic happiness. In a letter to her he describes Lady Hamilton as "a young woman of amiable manners, and who does honour to the station to which she is raised," and says that she has been "wonderfully kind and good to Josiah."

By the court of Naples he was received with the

Rejoins the Squadron off Toulon.

most flattering marks of attention. The king, who had been threatened in an insolent message with war by the French republic, was overjoyed at the news of the surrender of Toulon. He paid Nelson a visit on board the *Agamemnon*, made him dine with him, seated him at his right hand, called the English the saviours of Italy, and of his dominions in particular, and promised to send six thousand troops to reinforce the British at Toulon. The object of his mission was so warmly seconded by Sir William Hamilton and so speedily accomplished, that Nelson exclaimed in exultation: "Sir William, you are a man after my own heart. You do business in my own way. I am now only a captain; but if I live I will be at the top of the tree."

Having performed this business, to use his own words, "with a zeal which no one could exceed," he returned to join the squadron off Toulon. Writing on the 12th of October, he says: "Every day, at Toulon, has hitherto afforded some brilliant action on shore, in which the sea-officers have made a conspicuous figure. I have only been a spectator; but, had we remained, I should certainly have desired to be landed. Some of our ships have been pegged pretty handsomely; yet such is the force of habit that we seem to feel no danger. The other day we sat at a court-martial on board Admiral Hotham, when a French 74, our friend, three frigates, and four mortar-boats, were firing at a battery for four hours; the shot and shells going over us; which, extraordinary as it may seem, made no difference!" Three days before this was written, Nelson had been directed to proceed to Cagliari, in Sardinia, and to place himself under the orders of Commodore Linzee.

He sailed in prosecution of these instructions; and, on the 22^d of October, when off the Island of Sardinia,

Engages a French Squadron.

the *Agamemnon*, having only 345 men at quarters, the others being ashore in Toulon, or in prizes, she fell in with three French frigates, of 44 guns, a corvette of 24, and a brig of 14, from Tunis. Nelson immediately gave chase, and got near enough to engage one of the frigates, which, from her favourable situation, superior sailing, and skilful manœuvres, was enabled to keep up a running fight of three hours, at the expiration of which she had received so much damage as to be obliged to make signals of distress to her consorts, which showed a disposition to come to her relief. The *Agamemnon* having her maintopsail cut to pieces, main and mizen-masts and foreyard badly wounded, and her rigging much shot away, could not follow her adversary. In this predicament, Nelson expecting to be attacked by the whole force of the enemy, called his officers together, and, among other questions, asked them — “From what you see of the state of our ship, is she fit to go into action with such a superior force without some small refit and refreshment of our people?” — “She certainly is not,” was the unanimous reply. “Then wear the ship,” said he, “and lay her head to the westward; let some of the best hands be employed in refitting the rigging, and the carpenters get crows and capstan-bars to prevent our wounded spars from coming down; and get the wine up for the people with some bread, for it may be half an hour good before we are again in action.” For three hours the enemy had the option of renewing the contest, but they contented themselves with going to the assistance of their crippled consort; the *Agamemnon*, which had but one man killed and two wounded, pursued her course to Cagliari, and thence followed Commodore Linzee, who had sailed for Tunis. Nelson afterwards learned that the frigate which he engaged was the *Melpomene*, that she had 24 men

Nelson's Interview with the Bey of Tunis.

killed, and 50 wounded, and would have struck long before he parted from her but for the gunner, who opposed her surrender; and when at length the colours were ordered to be struck by general consent, it fell calm around the combatants, while the other French ships came up with a fresh breeze to join their companion, which was so much damaged that she was laid up dismantled in St. Fiorenzo.

The object of Commodore Linzee's mission to Tunis was to detach the Bey from the interest of France. Lord Hood's instructions directed him to expostulate with his excellency in the strongest and most impressive manner on the impolicy of giving countenance and support to a sanguinary government like that of France, by which the king and queen had been barbarously beheaded. The Bey was a shrewd man, and, in the conference which Nelson held with him, displayed a sagacity which disconcerted even the captain of the *Agamemnon*. When the latter expatiated on the excesses committed by the French government, the Bey drily replied: "Indeed nothing can be more heinous than the murder of their sovereign: and yet, sir, if your historians tell the truth, your own countrymen once did the same." Hopes had been entertained that the Bey might be prevailed upon to permit the English to possess themselves of a French convoy then lying at Tunis, under the protection of an 80-gun ship and a corvette: "but," as Nelson observed, "the English never yet succeeded in a negotiation against the French, and we have not contradicted our practice at Tunis, for the *Monsieurs* have completely upset us with the Bey; and, had we latterly attempted to take them, I am certain he would have declared against us, and done our trade some damage."

Foiled in this negotiation, Nelson proceeded to execute the further instructions of Lord Hood, which

State of Corsica.

directed Commodore Linzee to send him immediately to cruize from Calvi in Corsica to the gulf of Espécia, to look out for the frigates which had before escaped him, but not to let it be known where he was gone; and he was to take the command of the frigates which he should find on that station. In a letter to Captain Locker, after giving this intelligence, he says that the *Agamemnon* had had her share of service, having had the anchor down but thirty-four times since sailing from the Nore, and then only to get water and provisions. He added that one hundred of her crew being then absent, she was not much better than a 50-gun ship. To another friend, however, he jocosely observed on this occasion, that the hands he had were chiefly Norfolk men, and he always reckoned them as good as two others.

The people of Corsica, who, during the preceding half century, had made ineffectual attempts to shake off their dependence, first on Genoa and afterwards on France, to which that Republic had transferred the sovereignty of the island, had considered the recent events in the south of France, and the occupation of Toulon by the English, as favourable to an attempt to recover their liberty. They were joined by their celebrated countryman, General Paoli, whose heroic exertions to rescue his native land from the yoke of France had driven him into honourable exile for twenty years in England. This portion of the population naturally looked to Britain for succour. Paoli wrote to Lord Hood, representing that the French might with ease be driven from the posts which they held in Corsica; he specified the vulnerable points of attack, and intimated that even the mere appearance of a few ships would prove of essential service. A small squadron was consequently ordered to sail for Corsica, under Commodore Linzee. In January, 1794, Paoli transmitted fresh assurances of the active

Lord Hood assists the Corsicans to expel the French.

co-operation of his brave Corsicans to drive the French from their strongholds. Shortly afterwards, Lord Hood, having received certain information that the French had embarked at Nice 8,000 troops, which were to proceed at all risks to Corsica, detached three more frigates to join Captain Nelson, who was kept cruising off the island, the more effectually to line the coast and to intercept supplies destined for the enemy. Meanwhile, Toulon had been invested by a republican army, (in which Bonaparte acquired his first military distinction as commander of the artillery,) and compelled to surrender. On its evacuation, Lord Hood repaired to Corsica, with his fleet, having on board upwards of two thousand unfortunate inhabitants of Toulon, who dreaded the vengeance of the republican conquerors too much to remain behind.

Lord Hood had previously despatched Lieutenant-colonel (afterwards Sir John) Moore, and Major Köhler, who were accompanied by Sir Gilbert Elliot, to concert a plan of operations with General Paoli; and it had been arranged that, in consideration of the assistance afforded to the Corsicans in clearing the island of the French, it should be delivered into the possession of his Britannic Majesty, and engage to adopt such a form of government as he should approve. Preparations were accordingly commenced for the reduction of St. Fiorenzo, Bastia, and Calvi, the principal towns of the island, which were occupied by the enemy. Close to the first mentioned place, the French had a magazine of flour near their only mill. Nelson, seizing a happy moment, landed sixty seamen and the like number of soldiers, who burned the mill, threw all the flour into the sea, and returned on board without the loss of a man, in spite of the gun-boats and a force of a thousand men sent against them by the French. A few days afterwards

Nelson destroys Shipping at Regliani.

he was in another affair, of which he gives the following account. "I anchored off Regliani, and sent on shore to say that 'I was come to deliver them from the republicans, and wished to be received as a friend; but that, if a musket was fired, I would burn the town.' The answer from the commandant was: 'We are republicans; that word alone ought to satisfy you. It was not to a place without defence you ought to address yourself. Go to St. Fiorenzo, to Bastia, or Calvi, and they will answer you according to your wishes. As to the troops whom I command, they are ready to show you that they are composed of French soldiers.' On receiving this answer, I landed and struck the national colours, with my own hand, on the top of an old castle, and ordered the tree of liberty in the centre of the town to be cut down, not without great displeasure from the inhabitants. The military commandant retired to a hill about two miles distant, where he paraded the troops and kept the national flag flying all day. We destroyed about 500 tuns of wine ready to be shipped, and ten sail of vessels."

While Nelson was thus employed in preventing succours from reaching Bastia or any of the villages to the northward of that capital, the troops brought by Lord Hood from Toulon, under the command of General Dundas, were landed in the bay of St. Fiorenzo, and, assisted by the seamen, commenced operations for the reduction of that place. The works by which it was defended, having been stormed one after another, on the 19th of February the French retreated from St. Fiorenzo to Bastia, having first sunk one of their frigates and burned another in the bay. The English of course took possession of the town, and the frigate which had been sunk was afterwards weighed and named the St. Fiorenzo. On the same day Nelson landed at

Preparations for reducing Bastia by the Naval Force.

Avisena, took the tower of Miomo, and drove the French force opposed to him within gun-shot of the walls of Bastia.

The reduction of Bastia was now resolved on by Lord Hood, who submitted his plans to General Dundas. The general declined to co-operate in them, as being visionary and impracticable, without a reinforcement of 2000 men, which he expected from Gibraltar. Lord Hood therefore resolved to reduce Bastia with the unaided naval force under his command. Nelson, in examining the defences of the city, approached so close that the enemy opened their fire from a battery of two guns, from which they were soon dislodged by the *Agamemnon*; a fire of shot and shells was then commenced from the town, but without doing the ship any damage of consequence; at the same time her guns were so well pointed that not a shot was fired in vain. Adverting in a letter to this affair, he says: "Our little brush last Sunday happened at the moment when part of our army appeared on the hills over Bastia, they having marched over-land from St. Fiorenzo, which is only twelve miles distant. If I had carried with me five hundred troops, to a certainty I should have stormed the town. Armies go so slow, that seamen think they never mean to get forward: but I dare say they act on a surer principle, though we seldom fail."

Dundas, having resolved not to lend Lord Hood any military aid in his attempt to reduce Bastia, proceeded so far in his caution as to withdraw the troops which had reached the heights above the city, and to make them return to St. Fiorenzo. "What Dundas could have seen to make a retreat necessary," observes Nelson in his journal, "I cannot comprehend. The enemy's force is 1000 regulars, and 1000 or 1500 irregulars; it is my firm opinion that the *Agamemnon*, with only the frigates now here, lying

Hardships endured by the Crew of the Agamemnon.

against the town for a few hours, with 500 troops ready to land when we had battered down the seawall, would to a certainty carry the place." Writing to his wife on the same subject, he says: "You will be surprised to hear that General Dundas has retired from before Bastia without making an attack. God knows what it all means! Lord Hood is gone to St. Fiorenzo to the army, to get them forward again. A thousand men would to a certainty take Bastia; with 500 and Agamemnon I would attempt it. Lord Hood said publicly, that if he thought it proper to give me three sail of the line, and 500 men, he was sure I should take the town, although probably not the heights; but he would not sacrifice his seamen and ships in doing what the finest army of its size that ever marched could and wished to do. General Paoli has told them, that if they don't keep my force low, I shall take Bastia before they pitch their tents in St. Fiorenzo. My seamen are now what British seamen ought to be — almost invincible: they really mind shot no more than peas."

The hardships endured at this time by the crew of the Agamemnon were not trifling. At the date of March 12, Nelson's journal says:—"We are absolutely without either water provisions, or stores of any kind, and not a piece of canvas, rope, or twine, or a nail, in our ship; but we cheerfully submit to it all, if it turns out for the advantage and credit of our country." On the 16th the captain of the Agamemnon sent an express to Lord Hood, to tell him that, to use his own words, "they had nothing to eat. Yet," he added, "if your lordship has any wish for me to remain off Bastia, I can, by going to Porto Ferrajo, get water and stores, and twenty-four hours at Leghorn will give us provisions. Our refitting, which would take some time, could be put off a little. My wish is to be present at the attack of

Marines and Seamen landed for the Siege of Bastia.

Bastia ; and if your lordship intends me to command the seamen who may be landed, I assure you I shall have the greatest pleasure in performing that or any other service where you may think I can do most good ; even if my ship goes into port to refit, I am ready to remain. We are certainly in bad plight at present ; not a man has slept dry for many months."

Meanwhile, General Dundas had been succeeded in the command of the troops by Brigadier-General D'Aubant, who pursued the same course as his predecessor. Lord Hood, in pursuance of his determination to reduce the place, with the force at his own disposal, landed on the 4th of April the remains of the 11th, 25th, 39th, and 69th regiments, who, having been originally ordered to serve as marines, were consequently borne on the books of his ships as part of their respective complements. These troops, 1183 in number, and 250 seamen, were under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Villettes, and Captain Nelson, assisted by Captains Hunt, Serocold, and Buller. On the 22^d of the same month, Nelson writes to his wife : " We are here with a force not equal to our wishes or our wants, and with only half of what is at present on the island. General D'Aubant will not attack our enemy with 2000 as fine troops as ever marched, whilst we are here beating them from post to post with 1000. My ship lies on the north side of the town with some frigates, and Lord Hood is on the south side. It is a very hard service for my poor seamen, dragging guns up such heights as are scarcely credible." On the same subject he says in his journal : " The labour of getting up guns [to a battery on the heights] was a work of the greatest difficulty, and which never, in my opinion, would have been accomplished by any other than British seamen."

Siege of Bastia.

The dangerous nature of this service may be inferred from these passages in a letter written in the beginning of May to Mrs. Nelson. "I need not, I am certain, say that all my joy is placed in you; I have none separated from you. You are present to my imagination, be where I will. I am convinced you feel interested in every action of my life, and my exultation in victory is two-fold, knowing that you partake of it. Only recollect that a brave man dies but once—a coward all his life long. We cannot escape death, and, should it happen to meet me in this place, remember it is the will of Him in whose hands are the issues of life and death. I have no fears about the final issue of the expedition. It will be victory. Bastia will be our's. Time will show the enemy's force; if it be small, the Fiorenzo commanders ought to be blamed; if it be large, they are highly culpable for allowing a handful of brave men to be on such a service unsupported. My only fears are that these soldiers will advance when Bastia is about to surrender, and deprive us of part of the glory."

On commencing the siege of Bastia, Lord Hood had sent a flag of truce to the city, with a summons to surrender. Lacombe St. Michel, the commissioner from the Convention, returned this spirited reply: "I have hot shot for your ships, and bayonets for your troops. When two-thirds of mine are killed, I will then trust to the generosity of the English." A second flag of truce, sent on the 8th of May, met with a similar reception, the mayor declaring that 'they would return bomb for bomb, and shot for shot.' So unremitting, however, and so successful, were the efforts of the besiegers, that proposals were made for surrender on the 19th of May. On the following day, General D'Aubant with the army from St. Fiorenzo appeared upon the hills above the city; on

Surrender of Bastia.

the 22^d the troops took possession of all the outposts, and the British colours were hoisted with three cheers from every seaman and soldier; and on the 24th 4,500 French laid down their arms to fewer than 1000 British soldiers who were serving as marines. "I always was of opinion," he writes to Mrs. Nelson, "have ever acted up to it, and never had any reason to repent it, that one Englishman was equal to three Frenchmen. Had this been an English town, I am sure it would not have been taken by them. They have allowed us to batter it without once making any effort to drive us away. I may say truly that this has been a naval expedition. Our boats prevented anything from getting in by sea; our sailors hauling up great guns, and then fighting them on shore. . . . When I reflect what we have achieved, I am all astonishment. Providence has ever been gracious to me, and has been my protector from the many perils incident to my situation."

A fact which most strongly illustrates the daring energy of his character, is stated in his correspondence with Mrs. Nelson, about half a year afterwards, at which time it was still unknown to Lord Hood. It was not till after all the arrangements had been made for the attack of the town that he was informed of the great superiority of the enemy's force in Bastia: "but," he adds, "my own honour, Lord Hood's honour, and the honour of our country, must all have been sacrificed, had I mentioned what I knew. Therefore, you will believe what must have been my feelings during the siege, when I had often proposals made to me by men now rewarded, to write to Lord Hood to raise the siege."

The garrison of Bastia was conveyed, according to the terms of the capitulation, to Toulon, and the ships which carried these troops brought intelligence on their return that the French fleet was preparing to

Lord Hood sails in quest of the French Fleet.

sail from that port. The next morning a letter from Admiral Hotham apprized Lord Hood that it was actually out. Lord Hood, joined by Admirals Hotham and Cosby, and taking the Agamemnon also with him, steered for the Hieres Islands in quest of the enemy. Nelson now anticipated an opportunity of distinguishing himself. "I pray God," he wrote to his wife, "we may meet this fleet. If any accident should happen to me, I am sure my conduct will be such as will entitle me to the royal favour: not that I have the least idea but I shall return to you, and full of honour; if not, the Lord's will be done! My name shall never be a disgrace to those who may belong to me. The little I have, you know, I have given to you, except a small annuity. I wish it was more; but I have never got a farthing dishonestly; it descends from clean hands. Whatever fate awaits me, I pray God to bless you and preserve you for your son's sake." His ardent spirit always entered into battle with a full conviction of its dangers, but without indulging in any of those superstitious forebodings which have often shaken the resolution of the bravest seamen. On this occasion, however, his hopes of an engagement were disappointed. The French fleet was discovered close under the land near St. Tropez. Lord Hood, with his squadron, endeavoured to get between the enemy's ships and the shore, but was prevented by the failure of the wind; and he had the further mortification to perceive that, by the help of boats from Antibes and other places, they had all been towed within the shoals in the road of Gourjean, where they were protected by the batteries on the islands of St. Honoré and St. Marguerite, and on Cape Garoupe. "Here," says Southey, in his *Life of Nelson*, "the English admiral planned a new mode of attack, meaning to double on five of the nearest ships; but

Nelson is employed in the Siege of Calvi.

the wind again died away, and it was found that they had anchored in compact order, guarding the only passage for large ships. There was no way of effecting this passage, unless by warping or towing the vessels, and this rendered the attempt impracticable. For this time the enemy escaped; but Nelson bore in mind the admirable plan of attack devised by Lord Hood, and there came a day when they felt its tremendous effects."

The *Agamemnon* returned immediately to Corsica, where Nelson was ordered to co-operate with General Stuart, who had meanwhile taken the command of the troops, in the siege of Calvi. On the 12th of June, he anchored off Bastia; next morning the whole of the troops, 1450 in number, exclusive of officers, were embarked, and on the 19th landed in an inlet called Porto Agro, about three miles and a half from Calvi. Captain Nelson landed, with 250 seamen, who were employed in getting on shore baggage, provisions, and ammunition for the army, and cannon which they were obliged to drag up steep mountains, to form batteries against the principal works of the French. Nelson and Captain Hallowell took it in turn to command in the advanced battery twenty-four hours at a time. Speaking of the exertions of his brave fellows to Lord Hood, he writes with his wonted enthusiasm: "We will fag ourselves to death before any blame shall lie at our doors; and I trust, my dear lord, it will not be forgotten that twenty-five pieces of heavy ordnance have been dragged to the different batteries and mounted, and all, but the three at the Royal Louis battery, have been fought by seamen, except one artilleryman to point the guns, and at first an additional gunner to stop the vent: but, as I did not choose to trust seamen's arms to any but seamen, he was withdrawn. All the mortars also have been worked by

Nelson loses the Sight of his right Eye.

seamen. Every man landed is actually half bare-footed."

These services were not performed without imminent personal peril. Captain Serocold was killed by a grape-shot passing through his head, as he cheered the people who were dragging a gun; and Nelson relates in his journal that one of the enemy's shells, falling in the centre of a battery where he was with General Stuart and a hundred other persons, blew up the battery magazine, but not a man was much hurt. A few days afterwards, on the 12th of July, he proved less fortunate. The manner in which he mentions the circumstance himself to Lord Hood furnishes a rare instance of his disregard of personal suffering. "Reports," he says, "we know, get about, and as neither time nor many other circumstances may be mentioned, it is best to say it myself that I got a little hurt this morning, not much, as your lordship may judge by my writing." What he made so light of, as a little hurt, eventually deprived him of the sight of his right eye. In a letter to Mrs. Nelson, he gives these particulars of the accident. "As it is all past, I may now tell you that, a shot having hit our battery, the splinters and stones from it struck me with great violence in the face and breast. Although the blow was so severe as to occasion a great flow of blood from my head, yet I most fortunately escaped, having only my right eye deprived of its sight: it was cut down, but is so far recovered as for me to be able to distinguish light from darkness. As to all the purposes of use it is gone; however, the blemish is nothing — not to be perceived unless told. The pupil is nearly the size of the blue part, I don't know the name. At Bastia, I got a sharp cut in the back. You must not think that my hurts confined me: no, nothing but the loss of a limb would have kept me from my duty, and I believe my

Surrender of Calvi.

exertions conduced to preserve me in this general mortality." Only a week after this circumstance, in his report of the storming of Fort Mozello, to Lord Hood, he says: "I could have wished to have had a little part in the storm, if it had only been to have placed the ladders, and to have pulled away the palisadoes; however, we did the part allotted for us."

By the 19th of July the English were in possession of all the enemy's outposts. Terms of surrender, proposed by General Stuart, were at first agreed to, but finally rejected; on which masked batteries established against the citadel were opened with such effect, that much of the parapet was beaten down, and the houses in the citadel were either in ruins or in flames. A suspension of hostilities was solicited; the garrison capitulated on condition that the troops and such of the inhabitants as chose to depart should be conveyed to Toulon; and, on the 10th of August, this last stronghold of the French in Corsica was delivered up to the English forces.

In a letter written a few days before to his wife, Captain Nelson says: "This day I have been four months landed, except a few days when we were after the French fleet, and I feel almost qualified to pass my examination as a besieging general." Though he acknowledged that Lord Hood's thanks to him, both public and private, were the handsomest that man could give, and though his journal of the operations in Corsica was transmitted by the commander-in-chief to the Admiralty, that Nelson might have an opportunity of telling his own story, still it does not appear that his pre-eminent merits were properly appreciated. Indeed, with the exception of the general vote of thanks from the House of Commons, in which he participated, they seem to have been wholly overlooked. His sensitive mind was keenly stung by this neglect. "One hundred and ten days," he

Nelson's Services not rewarded.

wrote to Captain Locker, "I have been actually engaged at sea and on shore against the enemy; three actions against ships, two against Bastia in my ship, four boat actions, and two villages taken, and twelve sail of vessels burnt. I do not know that any one has done more. I have had the comfort to be always applauded by my commander-in-chief, but never to be rewarded: and, what is more mortifying, for services in which I have been wounded, others have been praised, who at the same time were actually in bed, far from the scene of action." And to his eldest sister he says, "They have not done me justice in the affair of Calvi; but never mind!—I'll have a gazette of my own!"

To Mrs. Nelson he writes about this time: "I expect to see you in the fall of the year; and although I shall not bring with me either riches or honours, yet I flatter myself I shall bring an unblemished character. . . . When Lord Hood leaves this station, I should be truly sorry to remain; he is the greatest sea-officer I ever knew, and what can be said against him I cannot conceive: it must be only envy, and it is better to be envied than pitied. But this comes from the army, who have poisoned some few of our minds. The taking of Bastia, contrary to all military judgment, is such an attack on them that it is never to be forgiven."

Connected with Nelson's services in Corsica, it may here be mentioned, though not strictly in chronological order, that, in the following April, he wrote to Mr. Wyndham, then secretary at war, to apply for an allowance to which he considered himself entitled. His voluntary service on shore had occasioned additional expence, and all his ship furniture was totally lost, owing to the movements of a camp. After recapitulating the arduous duties in which he had been engaged during the sieges of Bastia and Calvi, he

Nelson is sent to Genoa with Despatches.

added : " I trust I do not ask an improper thing, when I request that the same allowance may be made to me, as would be made to a land officer of my rank, which, situated as I was, would be that of brigadier-general ; or else my additional expences paid me. I have stated my case plainly, and leave it to your wisdom to act in it as is proper." Mr. Wyndham's reply barely acknowledged the receipt of his letter, and acquainted him that no pay had ever been issued under the direction, or to the knowledge, of the War-office, to officers of the navy serving with the army on shore.

With a crew greatly diminished by illness, consequent on the heat of the climate, and the harassing operations in which they had been engaged, Nelson was ordered by Lord Hood to proceed to Genoa, with despatches for Mr. Drake. He then rejoined the fleet, the command of which soon afterwards devolved on Admiral Hotham by the recall of Lord Hood. He writes about this time to his wife that he is in perfect health, but adds : " My ship's company are by no means recovered, and we are destined to keep the sea, until both ship and crew are rendered unfit for service. . . . Before spring I hope we shall have peace, when we must look out for some little cottage. I assure you I shall return to the plough with redoubled glee." And again : " I hope we have many happy years to live together, and if we can bring £2000 round, I am determined to purchase some neat cottage, which we should never have occasion to change. As to Josiah, I have no doubt but he will be a comfort to both of us ; his understanding is excellent, and his disposition really good ; he is a seaman every inch of him."

The following passages show how great a pride he took in the high character acquired by his ship and her gallant crew,—“ There has been a most diabolical

The Success and Activity of the *Agamemnon* accounted for.

cal report here, of *Agamemnon's* being captured and carried into Toulon, owing to my running into the harbour's mouth. I hope it has not reached England. Never believe any thing you may see in the papers about us, and rest assured that *Agamemnon* is not to be taken easily: no two-decked ship in the world, we flatter ourselves, is able to do it." And on a subsequent occasion he says: "We have had nothing but gales of wind, but in *Agamemnon* we mind them not; she is the finest ship I ever sailed in, and, were she a 74, nothing should induce me to leave her while the war lasted; for not an hour this war will I, if possible, be out of active service."

The success and the activity of the *Agamemnon*, while under the command of Captain Nelson, may, perhaps, be imputed to a very simple cause—that of the national spirit of an English crew being awakened into full action, and directed towards a proper end, by the skill and courage of their commander. But the biographer, whose part it is not to remain satisfied with general causes, cannot but imagine that he perceives another: the greatest part of the ship's company, as already observed, were more peculiarly the countrymen of their commander. A moment's reflection on the human character will be sufficient to convince us of the force of this principle. The natural courage of the men is inflamed to greater exertions by their attachment to their commander and to each other. The body become animated with a spirit of emulation peculiar to themselves; they consider themselves as forming a separate community, as did the crew of the *Agamemnon*, who thus felt a pride in raising their appellation of "men of Norfolk" to reputation and distinction. In time of danger, when great exertions, and consequently great motives, are required, might not this principle be applied with

The Success and Activity of the Agamemnon accounted for.

considerable effect?—The greater the affinity between the officer and his men, and between the men and each other, in the same proportion will their attachment, their sympathy, and their efforts in the common cause, be augmented. The affections of private and domestic life are thus pressed into public service; men fight not only for their country, but for their commander, for themselves, and what is, perhaps, yet stronger than all, for the honour of their peculiar body, and the distinction of their native district.

CHAPTER IV.

1795.

STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN — TRANSACTIONS OF THE AGAMEMNON — ACTION WITH THE FRENCH FLEET — NELSON IS APPOINTED COLONEL OF MARINES — SENT WITH A SQUADRON OF FRIGATES TO GENOA, TO CO-OPERATE WITH THE AUSTRIAN AND SARDINIAN FORCES — SECOND ENCOUNTER WITH THE FRENCH FLEET — NELSON'S MEASURES FOR STOPPING THE TRADE BETWEEN NEUTRAL POWERS AND FRANCE ON THE COAST OF ITALY — OPERATIONS OF THE HOSTILE ARMIES — DEFEAT OF THE AUSTRIANS — NELSON'S VINDICATION OF HIMSELF AGAINST AN ATROCIOUS CALUMNY.

THE year 1795 opened with no very flattering prospect for the British interests in the Mediterranean. Corsica had been declared an appendage to the British crown; and the administration of the affairs of the island was committed to its own parliament, under an English viceroy, Sir Gilbert Elliot. This arrangement no doubt disappointed many of the Corsicans, who had been friendly to England as an ally, and who hoped by her aid to raise themselves into an independent state. The French party there was still powerful; the then rulers of the French republic made no secret of their determination to recover the island, and they laboured with indefatigable activity to equip a strong armament for the purpose at Toulon. The British fleet under Admiral Hotham was reduced to thirteen sail of the line, and these were short of their usual complement of men. The French had a superior force in the outer road of Toulon, and thirty ships at Marseilles were equipping as transports, for the conveyance of troops, as it was believed,

The French Fleet at Toulon puts to Sea.

to Corsica. Their fleet at length put to sea with positive orders to seek and destroy that of the British ; and on the 8th of March, Admiral Hotham, then in Leghorn road, received an express from Genoa, informing him that the enemy's force, consisting of fifteen sail of the line and three frigates, had been seen on the 6th off the isle of Marguerite. The British admiral immediately started in quest of them : they were discovered on the 10th; the signal was made for a general chase, and in the evening to form in the order of battle.

Nelson now anticipated a general engagement; and, as it was his practice on such occasions, he addressed a few lines to his wife. " We are just in sight of the French fleet," he says. " We have but little wind, and unfortunately the enemy are in-shore of us ; however, I hope the admiral will allow us to go on, and, if the French do not skulk under their batteries, I trust we shall give a good account of them. Whatever may be my fate, I have no doubt in my own mind but that my conduct will be such as will not bring a blush on the face of my friends. The lives of all are in the hands of Him who knows best whether to preserve mine or not ; to His will do I resign myself. My character and good name are in my own keeping. Life with disgrace is dreadful. A glorious death is to be envied ; and, if any thing happens to me, recollect that death is a debt we must all pay, and whether now or a few years hence can be of but little consequence."

The account which Nelson has himself given of the action which followed is too characteristic to allow it to be related in any other words than his own. This narrative, entitled " Transactions on board his Majesty's ship *Agamemnon*, and of the fleet, as seen and known by Captain Nelson," after detailing the occurrences down to the 11th, on which

Nelson's Narrative of the Action with the French.

day the French fleet had been lost sight of, thus proceeds :—“ March 12th, at day-light, we saw near us the Princess Royal, Fortitude, and Egmont ; at the distance of four or five miles to the northward, the Captain, Illustrious, and Tancredi, a Neapolitan 74, [which had been sent from Naples to reinforce Admiral Hotham.] To the E. S. E. were a number of ships with the foot of their topsails out of the water, and to the south a number of ships, their hulls just rising out of the water. At six, the Egmont made the signal for a strange fleet, and at the same time the Princess Royal made the signal for the enemy's fleet south. We endeavoured to join the Princess Royal, which we accomplished at nine A.M. Light airs, southerly, the enemy's fleet nearing us very fast, our fleet nearly becalmed. At a quarter past nine, Admiral Goodall made the signal for the ships near to form ahead and astern of him as most convenient. Admiral Hotham made the same signal, and the Egmont stood from us to join Admiral Hotham ; our ships endeavouring to form a junction ; the enemy pointing to separate us, but under a very easy sail. They did not appear to me to act as officers who knew any thing of their profession. At noon they began to form a line on the larboard tack, which they never accomplished ; at two P.M. they bore down in a line ahead, nearly before the wind, but not more than nine sail formed. They then hauled the wind on the larboard tack, about three miles from us, the wind southerly, Genoa light-house N.N.E. about five leagues ; saw the town very plain. At half-past three P.M. joined Admiral Hotham, who made the signal to prepare for battle ; the body of the enemy's fleet about three or four miles distant. At six minutes past four, the signal was made to form the order of battle on the larboard tack, and at half-past four for each ship to carry a light during

Nelson's Narrative of the Action with the French.

the night; at sixteen minutes past five, for each ship to take suitable stations for their mutual support, and to engage the enemy as they came up. Our fleet at this time was tolerably well formed, and with a fine easterly breeze; which, had it lasted half an hour, would certainly have led us through the enemy's fleet about four ships from the van ships, that were separated from the centre about one mile. At three quarters past five the fleet hoisted their colours, and at dark the wind came fresh from the westward. At fifty five minutes past six, the signal was made to wear together. We had a fresh breeze all night, and stood to the southward, as did the enemy.

“ March 13th, at day-light, the enemy's fleet appeared in the s.w. distant about three or four leagues, with fresh breezes. Signal for a general chase. At eight A.M. a French ship of the line carried away her main and fore topmasts. At a quarter past nine the Inconstant frigate fired at the disabled ship, but, receiving many shot, was obliged to leave her. At ten A.M. tacked and stood towards the disabled ship and two other ships of the line. The disabled ship proved to be the Ça-Ira, of 84 guns; the two others were the Sans Culotte, 120 guns, and the Jean Barras, 74 guns. We could have fetched the Sans Culotte by passing the Ça-Ira to windward; but, on looking round, I saw no ship of the line within several miles to support me; the Captain was the nearest on our lee-quarter. I then determined to direct my attention to the Ça-Ira, who at a quarter past ten was taken in tow by a frigate; the Sans Culotte and Jean Barras keeping about gun-shot distance on her weather-bow. At twenty minutes past ten, the Ça-Ira began firing her stern chasers. At half-past ten, the Inconstant passed us to leeward, standing for the fleet. As we drew up with the enemy, so true did the Ça-Ira fire her stern guns that not a

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shot missed some part of the ship, and latterly the masts were struck by every shot, which obliged me to open our fire a few minutes sooner than I wished ; for it had been my intention to have touched her stern before a shot was fired. But, seeing plainly, from the situation of the two fleets, the impossibility of being supported, and, in case any accident happened to our masts, the certainty of being severely cut up, I resolved to fire as soon as I thought we had a certainty of hitting. Accordingly, at a quarter before eleven A.M. being within one hundred yards of the Ça-Ira's stern, I ordered the helm to be put a-starboard, and the driver and after-sails to be brailed up and shivered : and, as the ship fell off, we gave her our whole broadside, each gun double-shotted, and scarcely a shot appeared to miss. The instant all had been fired, braced up our after-yards, put the helm aport, and stood after her again. This manœuvre we practised till one P.M., never allowing the Ça-Ira to get a single gun from either side to fire on us ; they attempted some of their after-guns, but all went far ahead of us. At this time the Ça-Ira was a perfect wreck, her sails hanging in tatters ; mizen topmast, mizen topsail, and cross-jack yards shot away. At one P.M. the frigate hove in stays and got the Ça-Ira round. I observed the guns of the Ça-Ira to be much elevated, doubtless laid so for our rigging and for distant shots : and, when she opened her fire in passing, the elevation not being altered, almost every shot passed over us, very few striking our hull. The captain of the Ça-Ira told Admiral Goodall and myself afterwards, that we had killed and wounded 110 men, and had so cut his rigging to pieces, that it was impossible for him to get up other topmasts.

“ As the frigate first, and then the Ça-Ira got their guns to bear, each opened her fire, and we passed

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within half pistol-shot. As soon as our after-guns ceased to bear, the ship was hove in stays, keeping up, as she came round, a constant fire, and the ship was worked with as much exactness as if she had been turning into Spithead. On getting round, I saw the Sans Culotte, who had before wore, with many of the enemy's ships under our lee-bow, and standing, to pass to leeward of us, under top-gallant sails. At half-past one P.M. the admiral made the signal for the van ships to join him. I instantly bore away, and prepared to set all our sails; but the enemy, having saved their ship, hauled close to the wind, and opened their fire so distant as to do us no harm, not a shot, I believe, hitting. Our sails and rigging were very much cut, and we had many shot in our hull and between wind and water; but, wonderful to say, only seven men were wounded. The enemy, as they passed our nearest ships, opened their fire, yet not a shot, as I saw, reached any ship except the Captain, who had a few through her sails. We were employed until evening in shifting our top-sails and splicing our rigging; at dark we were in our station. The signal was then made for each ship to carry a light. What little wind we had was south-westerly all night:—stood to the eastward, as did the enemy.

“ March 14th, at day-light, we were taken aback with a fine breeze at N.W. which gave us the weather-gage, whilst the enemy's fleet kept the southerly wind. Saw the Ça-Ira and a line-of-battle ship, who had her in tow, about three miles and a half from us, and the body of the enemy's fleet about five miles distant. At a quarter past six A.M. the signal was made for a line-of-battle S.E. and N.W.; and at forty minutes past six for the Captain and Bedford to attack the enemy. At seven A.M. signal for the Bedford to engage close — Bedford's signal repeated for

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close action; at five minutes past seven for the Captain to engage close — the Captain's and Bedford's signals repeated. At this time the shot from the enemy reached us, but from a great distance. At a quarter past seven, the signal was made for the fleet to come to the wind on the larboard tack: this signal threw us and the Princess Royal to leeward of the *Illustrious*, *Courageux*, and *Britannia*. At twenty minutes past seven the *Britannia* hailed, and ordered me to go to the assistance of the Captain and Bedford: made all sail; Captain lying like a log on the water, all her sails and rigging being shot away; Bedford on a wind, on the larboard tack. At half-past seven, the signal made to annul coming to the wind on the larboard tack. At thirty-five minutes past seven, signal for the *Illustrious* and *Courageux* to make more sail; forty minutes past seven, the same signal repeated; forty-two minutes past seven, Bedford to wear, and *Courageux* to get into her station. At this time I passed the Captain, hailed Admiral Goodall, and told him Admiral Hotham's orders, and desired to know if I should go ahead of him. Admiral Goodall desired me to keep close to his stern. The *Illustrious* and *Courageux* took their stations ahead of the *Princess Royal*; the *Britannia* placed herself astern of me, and the *Tancredi* lay on the *Britannia*'s lee quarter. At eight a.m. the enemy began to pass our line to windward, and the *Ça-Ira* and the *Censeur* were on our lee side: therefore, the *Illustrious*, *Courageux*, *Princess Royal*, and *Agamemnon*, were obliged to fight on both sides of the ship. The enemy's fleet kept the southerly wind, and this enabled them to preserve their distance, which was very great. From eight to ten we continued engaging on both sides. About three quarters past eight, the *Illustrious* lost her main and mizen masts; at a quarter past nine, the *Courageux* lost her main and

Surrender of the French Ships.

mizen masts; at twenty-five minutes past nine, the *Ça-Ira* lost all her masts, and fired very little; at ten, *Le Censeur* lost her main mast. At five minutes past ten they both struck, and I sent Lieutenant George Andrews [brother of the lady for whom Nelson conceived an attachment in France] as gallant an officer as ever stepped a quarter-deck, to board them, who hoisted English colours, and carried their captains, by order of Admiral Hotham, to Admiral Goodall, on board the *Princess Royal*. By computation, the *Ça-Ira* is supposed to have about 350 killed and wounded both days, and *Le Censeur* about 250 killed and wounded. [The English ships engaged had 73 killed and 272 wounded.] From the lightness of the air of wind, the fleets were a very long time in passing each other, and it was past one P.M. before all firing ceased; at which time the enemy crowded all possible sail to the westward, our ships lying with their heads to the south-east and east. Our fleet had 1090 guns and 7650 men; the French had 1174 guns and 16,900 men."

Nelson's correspondence furnishes some particulars admirably illustrative of his ardent spirit, in addition to this valuable document. Thus, writing to his wife, he says: "I wish to be an admiral and in the command of the English fleet. I should very soon either do much or be ruined. My disposition cannot bear tame or slow measures. Sure I am, had I commanded our fleet on the 14th, that either the whole French fleet would have graced my triumph, or I should have been in a confounded scrape. I went on board Admiral Hotham as soon as our firing grew slack in the van, and the *Ça-Ira* and *Censeur* had struck, to propose to him leaving our two crippled ships, the two prizes, and four frigates to themselves, and to pursue the enemy; but he, much cooler than myself, said, 'We must be contented; we have done very

Nelson's Remarks on the Action.

well.' Now, had we taken ten sail and had allowed the eleventh to escape, when it had been possible to have got at her, I could never have called it well done. Goodall backed me; I got him to write to the admiral, but it would not do: we should have had such a day as, I believe, the annals of England never produced. I verily think, if the admiral can get hold of them once more, and he does but get us close enough, that we shall have the whole fleet. Nothing can stop the courage of English seamen."

Again he says: "The time of my being left out here by Lord Hood I may call well spent; had I been absent how mortified should I now be! What has happened may never happen to any one again; that only one ship of the line out of fourteen should get into action with the French fleet, and for so long a time as two hours and a half, and with such a ship as the *Ça-Ira*. Had I been supported, I should certainly have brought the *Sans Culotte* to battle—a most glorious prospect! A brave man runs no more risk than a coward, and *Agamemnon*, to a miracle, has suffered scarcely any thing."

In this encounter, which, as Nelson justly observed, could not be denominated a battle, as the enemy would not afford any opportunity of closing with them, the French ships, being provided with furnaces, continually fired hot shot and shells from some of their guns. They were also furnished with a combustible preparation, which was placed in a skeleton, like a carcass, became liquid when discharged, and was not to be extinguished by water. These materials were so carefully concealed on board the captured ships, that they were not found without difficulty. The prisoners said that they were sent by the Convention from Paris, that they had not used any of them, but only hot shot, which, however, they found to be useless. The consciousness of resorting to

Nelson appointed Colonel of Marines.

expedients which brave men would disdain, no doubt induced a belief which prevailed on board those ships that the English would give them no quarter, and hence the unusually obstinate resistance which they made.

The British fleet sailed with its prizes, which were much shattered and very leaky, to St. Fiorenzo, and then proceeded to Leghorn to refit. Here they were joined by another Neapolitan 74, and, after cruising in anxious expectation of a reinforcement from England, sailed for Minorca to await the arrival of a convoy from Gibraltar. As soon as it had joined, Admiral Hotham returned to St. Fiorenzo, where he arrived on the 29th of June.

If the French fleet had been despatched for an attempt against Corsica, their plan had evidently been frustrated by the result of the action in March, in which Nelson's merits were too conspicuously displayed not to demand some remuneration. Accordingly, on a promotion of flag-officers made on the 1st of June, in honour of the first anniversary of Lord Howe's victory, the captain of the *Agamemnon* was appointed colonel of marines, as he himself said, "in the handsomest manner," the answer returned to many applications being, "The King knows of no officer who has a better claim than Captain Nelson."

The French armies had begun at this time to overrun the north of Italy. The continental dominions of the king of Sardinia and part of the territory of the Genoese republic were in their possession. General de Vins, the commander of the Austrian and Sardinian force opposed to them, and the British minister at Turin, applied to Admiral Hotham for naval assistance to expel them from the Riviera de Genoa. As Nelson had been so much in the habit of soldiering, it was immediately determined that the Brigadier should go. He accordingly sailed

Second Action with the French Fleet.

from St. Fiorenzo in the *Agamemnon*, with three frigates and a cutter, and was directed to call off Genoa for two more frigates then lying there, if he should find it necessary. The day after his departure, he fell in with the French fleet, which was supposed to be at Toulon, and which chased him back to St. Fiorenzo. The chase continued for twenty-four hours; and, owing to the fickleness of the winds in those seas, he was occasionally hard pressed; but they being, to use his own expression, neither seamen nor officers, gave him many advantages. Admiral Hotham, who for nearly seven hours had the mortification to see Nelson's little squadron almost in possession of the enemy, and whose ships were engaged in refitting and watering, immediately got under weigh. This was on the 7th of July; but it was not till day-break on the 13th that the French fleet was discovered off the Hieres Islands. The signal for a general chase was immediately made; but, owing to baffling winds and vexatious calms, which render the result of every naval operation in the Mediterranean very doubtful, six only of our van ships could come up with the enemy's rear about noon. These six ships, the flyers as they were called, and *Agamemnon* among them, opened their fire, and, had the wind lasted twenty minutes longer, would have been alongside of as many of the enemy, Nelson having selected as his antagonist an eighty-gun ship, with a broad pendant flying. In the course of an hour, the *Alcide*, of 74, one of the sternmost of the enemy's ships, struck her colours; but, before she could be taken possession of, she was set on fire by a box of combustibles in her fore-top. The whole ship was soon in a blaze. Boats were instantly despatched from our fleet to save as many of her crew as possible; by great exertions three hundred were rescued from the conflagration, and the remainder, consisting of about four

Nelson is sent to co-operate with the Austrians.

hundred, were blown up with the ship. The mortification of our brave seamen on this day was extreme. In the morning they had hopes of taking the whole French fleet: subsequently, they had a fair prospect of securing six sail of the line, and now they saw their only prize wrested from them by the devouring flames. Meanwhile, the rest of the French fleet had got so far into Frejus Bay, while the greater part of our's was becalmed in the offing, that they were enabled to reach their own shore, from which they were not three leagues distant. Rear-admiral Mann, who had shifted his flag to the *Victory* on this occasion, commanded the six ships which were distinguished by their superiority of sailing, and proved himself, so Nelson observed, "a good man, in every sense of the word." In this action the *Agamemnon* had but one man wounded. She received, however, several shots under water, which gave her crew full employment at the pumps; but her captain insisted that this must have been the effect of accident, as he was certain the enemy only fired high.

After anchoring with the fleet for a few hours at St. Fiorenzo, Nelson was again despatched in the *Agamemnon*, with a squadron of frigates, to co-operate with General de Vins in Vado Bay, in the Genoese territory. From his first interview with the general, he considered him as an officer who was well acquainted with his duty, and well disposed to act with vigour on every proper occasion. He had, however, very soon reason to change this opinion of the Austrian general, when, in consequence of his inactivity, the zealous commander of the *Agamemnon* waited on him, and offered to embark the whole or any part of the Austrian army, and to transport it to the rear of the French, or to any point to the westward of their position which might be thought most advisable. It was probably in consequence of the great errors

His Efforts to stop the Trade between France and Neutral States.

which Nelson perceived in the conduct of de Vins, and the evident facilities for harassing an enemy which an army would possess when transported from one situation to another, that he afterwards repeatedly urged the necessity of having a considerable number of transports kept in the Mediterranean for that especial purpose.

Nelson soon perceived that the grand aim of the squadron under his command, in order to an efficient co-operation with the allied army, was to put an entire stop to all trade between Genoa, France, and the places occupied by the French army; and that, unless this trade were stopped, it would be almost impossible for the allied force to maintain its position, much less to drive the French out of the Riviera of Genoa. This point he strongly urged in his correspondence with Mr. Drake, the British minister at Turin, who came to Genoa to meet him. "So sensible am I," says he, "of the necessity of vigorous measures, that, if your excellency will assure me that it would be for the benefit of his majesty's service that I should stop all trade between the neutral powers and France and the places occupied by the armies of France, I will give proper directions to the squadron under my command for that purpose; and the vessels and their cargoes shall lie in Vado Bay until I can receive my commander-in-chief's directions about them; or if your excellency thought it proper to send an express to England, until an answer could return."

In explanation of this passage, Southey observes: "This sort of blockade Nelson could not carry on without great risk to himself. A captain in the navy, as he represented to the envoy, is liable to prosecution for detention and damages. This danger was increased by an order which had then lately been issued; by which, when a neutral ship was detained, a complete specification of her cargo was

Nelson's Efforts to stop the Trade between France and Neutral States.

directed to be sent to the secretary of the Admiralty, and no legal process instituted against her till the pleasure of this board should be communicated. This was requiring an impossibility. The cargoes of ships detained upon this station, consisting chiefly of corn, would be spoiled long before the orders of the Admiralty could be known; and then, if they should happen to release the vessel, the owners would look to the captain for damages. The only precaution which could be taken against this danger involved another danger not less to be apprehended; for, if the captain should order the cargo to be taken out, the freight paid for, and the vessel released, the agent employed might prove fraudulent and become bankrupt; and in that case the captain was responsible. Nelson therefore required, as the only means for carrying on that service, which was judged essential to the common cause, without exposing the officers to ruin, that the British envoy should appoint agents to pay the freight, release the vessels, sell the cargo, and hold the amount, till process was had upon it; government thus securing its officers."

It would appear, however, that, before any orders from superior authority could arrive, this zealous servant of his country had adopted such measures as he thought expedient, on his own responsibility. In a letter to his wife, dated July 24, he says:—"What changes in my life of activity! Here I am, having commenced a co-operation with an old Austrian general, almost fancying myself charging at the head of a troop of horse. Nothing shall be wanting on my part towards the success of the common cause. I have eight sail of frigates under my command. The service I have to perform is important, and I am acting not only without the orders of my commander-in-chief, but in some measure contrary to them. However, I have not only the support of his

Nelson's Efforts to stop the Trade between France and Neutral States.

majesty's ministers both at Turin and Genoa, but a consciousness that I am doing what is right and proper for the service of our king and country. Political courage in an officer abroad is as highly necessary as military courage."

In a letter to Admiral Hotham on the same subject, dated July 28, he says: "There are several vessels here laden with corn for France, some of them under passports from the Dey of Algiers. However, they must be stopped, if met with by the squadron under my orders, and the ministers at Genoa and Turin would be solely answerable for what may be the result. But the whole necessity of stopping all the vessels is comprised in a very few words — that if we do not stop supplies of corn, &c. going to France, the armies will return whence they came; and the failure of this campaign, from which so much is expected, will be attributed to our want of energy." Thus did the discerning mind of Nelson venture to point out the insufficiency of the orders which he had received, and to open the eyes of government to the injuries which the general cause sustained from the frauds of neutral vessels. Fortunately, his proceedings were approved by Lord Hotham, and his representations received from government that attention which they deserved.

Well might Nelson observe, in writing to Captain Locker: "The Mediterranean command includes such a variety of duty, when compared to any other station, that it requires a man of business." Admiral Hotham had proved himself on many occasions to be a brave seaman; but the peculiar situation of Italy, and an extensive correspondence arising out of it with foreign states, demanded rather an experienced diplomatist. It was on this ground that Sir William Hamilton, in a letter to Nelson, observed: "I can, *entre nous*, perceive that my old friend Hotham is not quite awake

He captures a Convoy at Alassio.

enough for such a command as that of the king's fleet in the Mediterranean." Even Nelson's subordinate command required a man of business, as well as a man of courage and promptitude. "At present," he says, "I do not write less than from ten to twenty letters every day: which, with the Austrian general and aid-de-camps and my own little squadron, fully employ my time; this I like, active service or none." And yet at this very time he complains that his "health and eyes are almost worn out," and that "poor Agamemnon, as well as her captain, must soon be laid up to repair."

A French squadron was lying at this juncture in the harbour of Genoa, and was hourly expected to attempt to escape. Nelson's cruisers were stationed on the *Especia* side of the gulf, at the very extremity of the Genoese territory, to intercept it; for he was most careful not to violate the neutrality of that republic. The doge, however, under the influence of France, complained that Genoa was blockaded, though all vessels not French, or not laden with French property, were permitted to go in and out in perfect security. One of his frigates, the *Inconstant*, on entering the port to communicate with Nelson, was even fired at; and this circumstance produced from him a spirited remonstrance, addressed to Mr. Drake, then at Genoa, in which he maintained, with his usual firmness and judgment, the right of British ships of war to enter neutral ports.

Towards the end of August, Nelson received information from General de Vins that a convoy bringing ammunition and provisions had arrived at Alassio, a place in the possession of the French army, and their principal rendezvous for transports and store-ships. He proceeded thither with his squadron, took nine vessels, burned a tenth, and drove another on shore. The French had two thousand troops in the

Action with Turkish Vessels.

town, which prevented his landing and destroying their magazines ; but, though their cavalry fired on the boats when boarding the vessels near the shore, he had not a man killed or wounded. Two of the galleys taken on this occasion, manned chiefly from the *Agamemnon*, and commanded by Lieutenants Andrews and Spicer, were sent a few days afterwards to capture a ship, laden with provisions, which had arrived at *Oneglia*. On their passage these officers fell in with three large vessels with lateen sails, which they immediately engaged, though it was ten o'clock at night. One of the ships was carried by boarding, but her crew, retiring to the others, cut her adrift ; all three being made fast together. The attack on the other two was continued with the greatest spirit ; but, owing to the great number of men on board them, and the height of the vessels themselves, the brave assailants were obliged after a long contest to retreat. The enemy had no colours hoisted, but a Greek flag was found in the prize. Nelson afterwards learned that they were Turkish vessels, " who," he says, " killed and wounded seventeen of my poor fellows : and I am sorry to add that the Turks got into *Genoa* with six millions of hard cash : however, they who play at bowls must expect rubbers, and the worse success now, the better I hope another time."

Whilst Captain Nelson was displaying this activity against the common enemy, he began to have reason to suspect that his allies were not so hearty in the cause as himself. " Our movements here," he writes, " are very slow. General de Vins has been long expected, but I fear in vain. He says that he has flattered and abused the Neapolitans, but nothing will induce them to act. A plan is now concerted between the general and myself, to embark, if these people will not act, five or six thousand men, and to make a landing between *San Remo* and *Vintimiglia*." In

Nelson complains of the Slowness of the Austrians.

another letter he says: "I am not quite so well pleased as I expected with this army, which is slow beyond all description; and I begin to think that the emperor is anxious to touch another four millions of English money. As for the German generals, war is their trade, and peace is ruin to them: therefore we cannot expect that they should have any wish to finish the war."

"If the admiral," he thus wrote to Sir Gilbert Elliot, "could give me one 74, I verily believe we should even yet gain possession of Nice. Mr. Drake perhaps has told you how we were obliged to manœuvre about the general; but the politics of courts are, I perceive, so mean that private people would be ashamed to act in the same way; all is trick and finesse, to which the common cause is sacrificed. The general wants a loop-hole, and I hope he will not have one; he shall not, if I can help it, for I want Villefranche for a good anchorage for this winter."

The French and Austrian armies were at this time in presence of one another; and on the 20th of September, General de Vins attacked St. Spirito, the strongest of the enemy's posts, and carried it after an attack of ten hours. Nelson anticipated that if equal success should attend the attack of one other point, it would place thirty-three miles of country, as far as Oneglia, in the hands of the Austrians, and oblige their adversaries to retire. He now devised a plan, "which," says he, "if the admiral will give me transports to carry a certain number of troops, will astonish the French and perhaps the English." This was to embark four or five thousand men, and land them at St. Remo, where it was proposed to establish head-quarters for magazines of every kind. The possession of this point was likely to be attended with many advantages: inasmuch as it would enable the Austrian general to turn his army either to the east

Plan for seizing St. Remo.

or the west; it was the only place between Vado and Villefranche where the squadron could lie in safety and anchor in almost all winds; Oneglia would be cut off from provisions; and Nice might be completely blockaded by sea. Nelson then proceeds: "The general, if he can be brought to move, is an officer of great abilities; but the politics of his court so constantly tie his hands, that he cannot always do what he thinks proper. However, if the army does not move, our minister, [Mr. Drake] who is fixed at head-quarters, will endeavour to withhold the remainder of the emperor's loan, say, gift: this is an all-powerful motive with a German court, and for which the lives of their subjects are held in no estimation. I am become a politician, almost fit to enter the diplomatic line." Mr. Drake expressed his belief that the Austrian general was not seriously inclined to undertake the expedition referred to above; and at the same time bore testimony to the high estimation in which the abilities, judgment, and activity, of Nelson were held by General de Vins and his officers.

Early in October, the active mind of Captain Nelson was engaged in devising some stratagem for inducing the French squadron in Genoa to leave that port. Taking advantage of his absence, they actually did make a push, and got off the evening before his return. "I am vexed," he says, "and disappointed; a squadron of French ships would have so graced my triumph!"

In November he was employed in covering the flank of the Austrians by sea. On the 18th of that month, being then in Genoa Roads, he thus writes to the Duke of Clarence: "The two armies are so strongly posted that neither is willing to give the attack; each waits to see which can endure the cold longest. The French general [Kellermann] has laid an embargo on all the vessels on the coast, near

Movements of the French.

a hundred sail; and it would not surprise me if he were meditating a retreat, in case his plans do not succeed, which I hope they will not, as the prevention of them in a great measure depends on our naval force under my orders. This has called me here, where a circumstance has arisen that has given us the alarm sooner than was intended. An Austrian commissary was travelling from Genoa towards Vado, with £10,000 sterling; and it was known he was to sleep at a place called Voltri, about nine miles from Genoa. This temptation was too great for the French captain of the *Brave*, in concert with the French minister, to keep his word of honour; and the boats of that frigate, with some privateers, went out of the port, landed, and brought back the money. The next day, the 11th of November, recruiting was publicly carried on in the town of Genoa, and numbers enlisted; and on the 13th, at night, as many men as could be collected were to sail under convoy of the *Brave*, and to land and take a strong post of the Genoese, between Genoa and Savona. A hundred men were to have been sent from the French army at Borghetto, and an insurrection of the Genoese peasantry was to have been encouraged, which, I believe, would have succeeded for several miles up the country. General de Vins must have sent four or five thousand men probably from his army, which would have given the enemy a fair prospect of success in their intended attack. My arrival here in the evening of the 13th caused a total change. The frigate, knowing her deserts, and what had been done here before with the transports and privateers, hauled from the outer to the inner mole, and is got inside the merchant ships, with her powder out, for no ships can go into the inner mole with powder on board; and, as I have long expected an embarkation from the westward to harass General de Vins, there I was fully on my

Movements of the French.

guard. Whilst I remain here no harm can happen, unless, which private information says is likely to take place, that four sail of the line and some frigates are to come here and take Agamemnon and her squadron. What steps the Austrian generals and ministers will adopt to get redress for this, I fear, allowed breach of neutrality on the part of the Genoese government, I cannot yet tell. It is a very extraordinary circumstance, but a fact, that, since my arrival, respect to the neutral port has not been demanded of me; if it had, my answer was ready — that it was useless and impossible for me to give it.”

In a letter to Sir Gilbert Elliot, Nelson gives some additional details respecting the plans of the French. “Seven hundred men,” he says, “were enlisted and embarked, with 7000 stand of arms, on board the Brave French frigate in Genoa and many small lateen vessels. These on a certain night were to have landed in a strong post between Voltri and Savona, to be joined in small feluccas by 1000 men from Borghetto; and an insurrection of the Genoese peasantry, we have every reason to believe, would have been made for forty miles up a valley towards Piedmont; but the money going from Genoa tempted these people to make an attack before their time, which certainly caused the plan to miscarry. Great preparation being made at Genoa, the Agamemnon was called for, might and main, to prevent the plan, which I most effectually did; and so fearful were the imperial minister and general of my leaving Genoa, that, I was told, if I quitted Genoa, the loss of 3000 Austrians would be the certain consequence. Thus I was placed in a cleft stick: if I left Genoa, the loss of 3000 men would be laid to my charge; and, if I was not at Pietra, the gun-boats would, unmolested, harass the left flank of the army, and their defeat might very probably be laid to the want of assistance from Agamemnon.”

Defeat of the Austrian Army.

The French, as we have already seen, had collected full a hundred sail of vessels to carry off their troops in case of defeat in the attack for which they were preparing. They had also ten or twelve gun-vessels, as many privateers, and a man-of-war brig. Many of these vessels, on which the French general had laid an embargo, were laden with corn. Nelson, aware of the great service which the destruction of these vessels would render to the cause of the allies, and not having himself sufficient force to accomplish this desirable object, wrote to Admiral Hotham, offering, if he would send him the Culloden and Courageux, to lead the attack in the Agamemnon, and with his squadron of frigates to take or destroy the whole. Had this been done, he felt convinced that the French would not have hazarded the attack which they made on the Austrians on the 23^d of November. The French, half-naked, fought with the determination to conquer or die. The Austrian centre and right wing fled. General de Vins, as if panic-struck, resigned the command during the engagement; and the left wing under General Wallis, though harassed by the gun-boats, alone effected its retreat in a soldier-like manner. With the rest of the army, "it was," as Nelson said, "the Devil take the hindmost." Had not the pass of the Bocchetta been kept open, in consequence of the Agamemnon being detained at Genoa, many thousands of the Austrians, and General de Vins himself, must have fallen into the hands of the French. Numbers of the fugitives ran without having ever seen the enemy, and some of them thirty miles beyond the advanced post. Nelson had a lieutenant, two midshipmen, and sixteen men, taken at Vado; the purser of the ship, who was there, ran with the Austrians eighteen miles without stopping — the men without arms, officers without soldiers, women without assistance. The oldest officers acknowledged that

Termination of Nelson's Campaign.

they never heard of so complete a rout, and without any reason; for, according to the accounts of Nelson's officers who had been taken at Vado, few of the French soldiers were more than 23 or 24 years old, a great many did not exceed 14 years, and all were without clothes. They added that they were sure "the barge's crew of the *Agamemnon* would have beat a hundred of them, and that to look at them any one would not believe, if the world had been covered with such people, that they could have beaten the Austrian army." The loss of Vado and the whole Riviera of Genoa was the consequence of this defeat. "Thus," adds Nelson, "has ended my campaign; and I am on my way to refit poor *Agamemnon* and her miserable ship's company at Leghorn. We are, indeed, worn out. Except six days, I have never been one hour off the station." So completely indeed had Captain Nelson worn out his old favourite ship by a series of hard service, that, when she went into dock, she had not a mast, yard, sail, or any part of the rigging, but had been cut to pieces with shot, and required renewing. The hull also had received so much damage that it had been long kept together by cables served or thrapped round her.

Notwithstanding all that the resolute commander of the *Agamemnon* had performed, his acknowledged integrity, and his perseverance, which neither the indolence nor the half measures of others could abate, our allies, as an excuse perhaps for their own incapacity and misconduct, fabricated a scandalous report that there existed a criminal connivance between the British cruisers in the Mediterranean and the coasting vessels of the enemy, by which they were enabled to land their cargoes for the supply of the French army in the Riviera of Genoa. The Austrian commander, who felt the effects of the misfortune, without being sufficiently aware of its cause, in his igno-

Nelson's Vindication against a Charge of Conivance with the Enemy.

rance of naval affairs, easily listened to these misrepresentations, and transmitted them to his court, whence, or through that of Turin, they reached England. A paper relative to this charge was consequently transmitted by Lord Grenville, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to Mr. Drake, and by him communicated to Captain Nelson. The letter, in which he indignantly repels the accusation, deserves to be transcribed.

“ Having received from Mr. Drake a copy of your lordship's letter to him, enclosing a paper highly reflecting on the honour of myself and other of his Majesty's officers employed on this coast under my orders, it well becomes me, as far as in my power lies, to wipe away this ignominious stain on our characters. I do, therefore, in behalf of myself and my much injured brethren, demand that the person, whoever he may be, that wrote or gave that paper to your lordship, should fully and expressly bring home his charge; which, as he states that this agreement is made by numbers of people on both sides, there can be no difficulty in doing. We dare him to the proof. . . . Perhaps I ought to close my letter here; but I feel too much to rest easy for a moment, when the honour of the navy and of our country is struck at through us; for, if ten captains, whom chance has thrown together, can instantly join in such a traitorous measure, it is fair to conclude we are all bad. As this traitorous agreement could not be carried on but by concert of all the captains, if they were on the stations allotted them, and as they could only be drawn from those stations by orders from me, I do most fully acquit all my brother captains from such a combination; and have to request that I may be considered as the only responsible person for what is done under my command, if I approve of the conduct of the persons under my orders, which in this most

Nelson's Vindication against a Charge of Connivance with the Enemy.

public manner I beg leave to do; for officers more alert, and more anxious for the good and honour of their king and country, can scarcely ever fall to the lot of any commanding officer. For myself, from my earliest youth, I have been in the naval service; and in two wars have been in more than one hundred and forty skirmishes and battles, at sea and on shore; have lost an eye, and have often bled, in fighting the enemies of my king and country: and God knows, instead of riches, my little fortune has been diminished in the service! But I shall not trouble your lordship further at present, than just to say, that, at the close of this campaign, where I have had the pleasure to receive the approbation of the generals of the allied powers; of his excellency, Mr. Drake, who has always been on the spot; of Mr. Trevor, who has been at a distance; when I expected and hoped, from the representations of his Majesty's ministers, that his Majesty would have most graciously condescended to have favourably noticed my earnest desire to serve him, instead of all my fancied approbation to receive an accusation of a most traitorous nature — it has almost been too much for me to bear. Conscious innocence, I hope, will support me."

This letter, as well as Mr. Drake's answer, must have been more than sufficient to justify Nelson and his officers, against a charge that was too vague and too general to admit of any public refutation.

Sir J. Jervis appointed Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean.

CHAPTER V.

1796 AND 1797.

SIR JOHN JERVIS APPOINTED COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN THE MEDITERRANEAN — HE SENDS NELSON WITH A SQUADRON TO THE GULF OF GENOA, TO CO-OPERATE WITH THE AUSTRIAN ARMY — DEFEAT OF THE AUSTRIANS — NELSON TAKES FOUR VESSELS AT LOANO, AND A CONVOY IN THE BAY OF ONEGLIA — SALE OF AUSTRIAN PRISONERS BY THE FRENCH — NELSON IS APPOINTED TO THE CAPTAIN — TAKES POSSESSION OF PORTO FERRAJO — BLOCKADES LEGHORN — SUPERINTENDS THE EVACUATION OF CORSICA — REMOVES HIS BROAD PENDANT INTO LA MINERVE — ACTION WITH TWO SPANISH FRIGATES — BATTLE OF ST. VINCENT — PROMOTED TO BE REAR-ADMIRAL AND KNIGHT OF THE BATH.

ADMIRAL HOTHAM had meanwhile relinquished the command in the Mediterranean to his temporary successor, Sir Hyde Parker, and the latter had been superseded by Sir John Jervis,* who was appointed to that station. Nelson, having finished the repair of the *Agamemnon* at Leghorn, and made her, to use his own expression, "as fit for sea as a rotten ship could be," joined his new commander, on the 19th of January, in the bay of St. Fiorenzo. Here he had his first interview with that officer, a man of congenial spirit and enterprise with himself. It was impossible that an officer of his penetration should not have been aware of the extraordinary talents and merits of Nelson; accordingly, he received him with the most friendly attention, and offered him the command of the *St. George*, 90, or *Zealous*, 74, which was respectfully declined. "I found the admiral,"

* Statue and Portrait, as Earl St. Vincent, in the Painted Hall, at Greenwich.

Nelson gains the Confidence of the Commander-in-Chief.

he says, "anxious to know many things, which I was a good deal surprised to find had not been communicated to him from others in the fleet; and it would appear that he was so well satisfied with my opinion of what is likely to happen, and the means of prevention to be taken, that he had no reserve with me respecting his information and ideas of what is likely to be done. He concluded by asking me if I should have any objection to serve under him with my flag," [a promotion being just then expected.] "My answer was that if I were ordered to hoist my flag, I should certainly be happy in serving under him; but, if Agamemnon were ordered to go home and my flag were not arrived, I should on many accounts wish to return to England; yet still, if the war continued, I should be very proud of the honour of hoisting my flag under his command."

Frequent conferences took place between these two distinguished officers. Nelson soon acquired the entire confidence of the admiral, who, before the end of January, sent him with a squadron to his old station in the gulf of Genoa, to prevent any small force from making a descent in Italy. "The fleet," he says, "was not a little surprised at my leaving them so soon, and I fancy there was some degree of envy attached to the surprise; for one captain told me: 'You did just as you pleased in Lord Hood's time, the same in Admiral Hotham's, and now again with Sir John Jervis; it makes no difference to you who is commander-in-chief.'" The key to this favour might easily have been found by the speaker in the zeal, intelligence, and resolution, with which Nelson performed every commission. He has assigned the same reason for it, only expressed in other words, when he says: "I appear to stand well with Sir John Jervis, and it shall not be my fault if I do not continue to do so. My conduct has no mystery.

He is sent to reconnoitre the French Fleet in Toulon.

I freely communicate my knowledge and observations, and only wish that whatever admiral I serve under may make a proper use of it. God forbid I should have any other consideration on service than the good of my country!"

In February, Captain Nelson was ordered to examine the state of the French fleet in Toulon. He ascertained that it consisted of thirteen sail of the line, and five frigates ready for sea, and four or five others, built since the evacuation of Toulon, in great forwardness. Off that port he was joined by Sir John Jervis, who, he says, "from his manner, as I plainly perceive, does not wish me to leave this station. He seems to consider me more as an associate than a subordinate officer, for I am acting without any orders. This may have its difficulties at a future day; but I make none, knowing the uprightness of my intentions. He asked me if I had heard any more of my promotion. I told him no. His answer was, 'You must have a larger ship, for we cannot spare you either as captain or admiral.'"

The *Agamemnon* proceeded to Genoa, where Nelson renewed his correspondence with Mr. Drake, and with the British envoys at Turin and Naples. He had also an interview with the Imperial and Sardinian ministers at Genoa, relative to the co-operation which he was capable of affording to the Austrian army in the campaign that was then about to commence. From private information which he had received, the French army destined for the invasion of Italy was to advance in three columns, one of which was to penetrate through the Genoese territory, or to be conveyed coastwise to take possession of Port Especia, for which they had two hundred flat boats and numerous gun-boats in readiness. He represented that the possession of this port would give the enemy easy access to Læghorn, to every

Plan for securing Vado Bay or Port Especia.

part of Italy, and even to the kingdom of Naples : that it would also afford security to the French flotilla, in its progress along the coast, where ships of war could not molest them, owing to the shallowness of the water ; and that the loss of Leghorn, by cutting off the supplies of the British squadron, would prevent its continuance on the northern coast of Italy. However, to obviate these misfortunes, he urged the necessity of securing possession of Vado Bay in preference, or taking Port Especia, without one of which points it was impossible to answer for the safety of Italy, from any attempts that might be made on it coastwise. Having communicated his correspondence on this subject to the admiral, Sir John Jervis not only bore public testimony of his thorough approbation of Nelson's conduct, but added in his private letter : " No words can express the sense I entertain of every part of your conduct, and I shall be very happy to manifest it in the most substantial manner : a distinguishing pendant you shall certainly wear, and I will write to Lord Spencer about you. In short, there is nothing within my grasp that I shall not be proud to confer on you." Nelson accordingly hoisted his pendant, with the temporary rank of commodore.

Meanwhile, field-marshal Beaulieu had been appointed to the chief command of the Austrian army in the north of Italy. Though upwards of seventy years of age, he yet possessed the fire of youth, as Nelson observed in one of his letters : still he was not an equal match for Bonaparte, who, at twenty-six, was sent about the same time by the Directory, through the influence of Barras, to supersede General Scherer in the command of the French army. Beaulieu meditated an attack on the enemy near Voltri, and Nelson sailed from Genoa to co-operate in it : but, owing to the Austrians getting too forward on

Defeat of the Austrians.

the day preceding that fixed for the attack, a slight action took place, and the French retreated in the night to Savona. Nelson had anchored at dark within half gun-shot of the Austrian camp; and had he been made fully acquainted with the movements of the army, probably not many of the French would have returned to Savona, as our ships commanded every foot of the road. The disastrous battles of Montenotte, Millesimo, and Dego, immediately followed; the loss of the Austrians in these affairs was not less than 10,000 men, killed, wounded, and prisoners.

A few days afterwards, Nelson had the mortification to see a French convoy, with supplies for their army, get into Vado Bay, while Sir John Jervis was off that place with his whole fleet. Nelson himself was on board the *Victory* at the moment. This convoy was reported to consist of two frigates and sixteen transports. He wrote to Sir John Jervis, offering to make an attempt to secure them with thirty barges and pinnaces. His plan was, that ten barges should attack each frigate; that one boat should be especially appointed with a most confidential officer, to cut the cable of each of the frigates, which, if the wind should be off the land, would in ten minutes drive out of soundings: and ten boats would be left to capture the transports. In consequence of this proposal, the admiral sent Captain Cockburn, in the *Meleager*, to reconnoitre the position of the enemy, who, however, had escaped under cover of the preceding night.

On the 25th of April, the commodore, having received information that another convoy had anchored at Loano, lost no time in proceeding to that place, with the *Meleager* and two smaller vessels. On his approach, he was mortified to observe that, instead of a convoy, only four vessels were lying under the bat-

Capture of a Convoy at Loano.

teries, "which opened," says he in his report, "on our nearing them, and the fire was returned as our ships got up, under cover of which our boats boarded the four vessels and brought them off: but, these vessels lying very near the shore, a heavy fire of musketry was kept up on our boats; and it is with the greatest grief I have to mention that Lieutenant James Noble, a most worthy and gallant officer, is, I fear, mortally wounded." Captain Cockburn was sent the same day with the four prizes to Leghorn. Sir John Jervis, in his official communication of this affair to the Admiralty, expressed the satisfaction he felt in having an officer of such zeal and local knowledge in the important station which the commodore occupied.

Nelson's efforts on this coast were nearly terminated soon afterwards, by the peace which Bonaparte, with his victorious army, dictated to the king of Sardinia. Of the state of Italy generally at this time, he thus writes:—"The Dukes of Parma and of Modena have both made treaties with the French, paying large sums of money; and in their treaties it is specified that certain pictures are to be delivered to be sent to Paris. The palace of the Louvre is to have the finest gallery of pictures in the world. The Pope has offered ten millions of crowns to prevent their coming to Rome, and it is said they have refused it, unless the famous statue of the Apollo Belvedere is sent to Paris. What a race of people! but they have done wonders. . . . If all the states of Italy make peace, we have nothing to look to but Corsica, which, in the present state of its inhabitants, is not, in my opinion, an object to keep us in the Mediterranean: we shall, I hope, quit it, and employ our fleet more to our advantage."

On the 31st of May, the commodore had the good fortune to fall in with six vessels, laden chiefly with cannon, mortars, ordnance stores, and entrenching tools,

Capture of a Convoy in the Bay of Oneglia.

which had been sent to Bonaparte, to assist in the siege of Mantua. They were running along shore, with the intention of landing their cargoes at St. Pietro d'Arena. Nelson immediately gave chase, when the vessels hoisted French colours, and anchored close under a battery in the bay of Oneglia. He directed Captain Cockburn to lead in, which he did in gallant style, followed by the *Agamemnon* and the *Peterell* and *Speedy*. After a short resistance from the battery and vessels, the boats of the squadron took possession of the latter, under a smart fire of musketry. The enemy, as soon as they surrendered, cut their cables, and ran their ships on shore, but they were got off by the crews of the boats.

The capture of this convoy not only caused the French army to raise the siege of Mantua, but brought to light a circumstance most disgraceful to their country. One of the prizes was laden with Austrian prisoners, and Nelson learned that it was the practice of the French to sell their prisoners of war to the Spaniards, who selected the ablest for recruits, and transported the rest of these wretched victims to their mines in South America. Such an outrage on humanity could not fail to excite the strongest indignation in a mind constituted like Nelson's. He communicated the matter to Sir John Jervis, who thus wrote on the subject to Lord Bute:—"The French commissioners on the coast of Genoa make a practice of selling the Austrian prisoners to the agents for recruiting the Spanish army. Commodore Nelson has fortunately had an opportunity of incontestably proving the fact, and was supplicated by the aforementioned agents not to report upon it. But he has my orders to make an exact representation of the case to the general commanding the Austrian army in Italy, and a formal complaint may be expected shortly from the court of Vienna to that of Madrid." In

Sale of Austrian Prisoners by the French.

another letter to Mr. Jackson, secretary of legation at Turin, the admiral further says: "From a Swiss dealer in human flesh, the demand made upon me to deliver up 152 Austrian grenadiers, serving on board his Majesty's fleet under my command, is natural enough; but that a Spaniard, who is a noble creature, should join in such a demand, I must confess astonishes me; and I can only account for it by the Chevalier Caamano being ignorant that the persons in question were made prisoners of war in the last affair of General Beaulieu, and are not deserters, and that they were most basely and inhumanly sold by the French commissaries, in the western Riviera of Genoa, to the vile crimps who recruit for the foreign regiments in the service of Spain. It is high time a stop should be put to this abominable traffic, a million times more disgraceful than the African slave-trade; and I trust the strong remonstrances about to be made by the court of Vienna to the court of Madrid will produce the desired effect."

Finding now but little scope for his active and enterprising spirit on the coast of Italy, Nelson thus wrote to his commander-in-chief: "I feel every degree of sensibility and gratitude for your kind and flattering attention in directing me to hoist a distinguishing pendant: but, as the service for which it was intended to be useful is nearly, if not quite, at an end, I assure you I shall have no regret in striking it; for it will afford me an opportunity of serving nearer your flag, and of endeavouring to show, by my attention, that I was not unworthy of commanding. . . . I must now take the liberty of saying a word respecting my health. It certainly is not bad; on the contrary, I believe it is better than what medical people assert; but I believe a little rest, and the baths of Pisa, the same nearly as those of Bath, would render me great benefit. If I could, without

Nelson is appointed Captain.

any impediment to the service, take twenty days to fit me for another winter, I should not dislike it—and yet perhaps I shall do without it." A fortnight afterwards he says: "I shall not go to Pisa at present; we may be useful here: and, to say the truth, when I am actively employed, I am not so bad. My complaint is as if a girth were buckled taut over my breast, and my endeavour in the night is to get it loose. If the service will admit of it, I shall perhaps, at a future day, take your leave."

It was about this time that the commodore, in those moments of depression, produced by ill health and great exertion both of mind and body, felt apprehensive that, after having served so long in the Mediterranean, in an old, worn-out ship, he should be removed from under the flag of an admiral who had shown him the most flattering attention. Sir John Jervis, however, was as unwilling to lose so zealous an officer, as Nelson was to be separated from the fleet under his command; and he acquainted him with his sentiments on that point. "I feel highly flattered," replied the commodore, "by your desire to have me continue to serve under your command, which I own would afford me infinite satisfaction." Again he says: "Indeed I cannot bear the thoughts of leaving your command. You have placed an unbounded confidence in me, and I own that no exertion of mine has been wanting for a moment to merit so great an honour."

In the month of May, orders having arrived that the worst third rate then in the line should return to England with a convoy, the state of the *Agamemnon* pointed her out as the ship, on Captain Sutton's declining to go home in the *Egmont*. In consequence, however, of the ill health of Captain Smith, of the *Captain*, 74, Nelson was transferred to that ship; and Captain Smith sailed for England in the *Agamemnon*,

He returns to his Station off the Coast of Italy.

but died at Gibraltar. On the subject of this change, he thus wrote to the admiral: "I rejoice not a little at the certainty of remaining under your command: four hours will change all my matters, and I am very anxious to resume my station." And in a letter to his wife, he thus expresses himself: "You will see by the date of this letter that I have at last left poor old Agamemnon. Whether it is right or wrong, time must determine. I have remained in a state of uncertainty for a week; and had the corn ships, which were momentarily expected from Naples, arrived, I should have sailed for England. The admiral has, on every occasion, behaved with the greatest attention to me; and if I am to serve, it is better I should serve in this country, where I am known and respected, than to take my chance by being sent home and ordered to another station."

Nelson returned in his new ship to his former station off the coast of Italy. He found her well manned, though not so active as the Agamemnon. Towards the end of June he sailed from Genoa to Leghorn. In spite of the neutrality of Tuscany, Bonaparte had, with his army, taken possession of that town, from which the English narrowly escaped with their property. In consequence of this step, it was deemed advisable by Sir Gilbert Elliot, viceroy of Corsica, to anticipate any intentions which the French might entertain of seizing the fortress of Porto Ferrajo, in the island of Elba, the possession of which would facilitate their designs against the kingdom of Corsica. The place was given up by the governor to a detachment of troops sent for the purpose, on condition that it should remain under the government of the grand-duke of Tuscany, and be restored to him on the conclusion of peace. Preparations were made, in case these terms had been rejected, for opening the fire of the ships, and storming the place on every point from land and sea.

Blockades the Port of Leghorn.

This service effected, the commodore proceeded to blockade the port of Leghorn, which he did so effectively, that not a vessel could go in or out without his permission. While engaged in this duty, he thus wrote to his commander-in-chief:—"The Captain has her wants, but I intend she shall last till the autumn; for I know, when once we begin, our wants are innumerable. I hope the Admiralty will send out fresh ships. The French are fitting out here from four to six tartans, with thirty-six-pounders, to drive me out of the roads, but I am prepared against fire-vessels and all other plans as well as I am able. . . . I have only now to beg that whenever you think the enemy will face you on the water, you will send for me—for my heart would break to be absent at such a glorious time."

In a letter addressed from the same station to Mrs. Nelson, he has laid open the inmost workings of his zealous and sanguine mind: "Had all my actions been gazetted, not one fortnight would have passed during the whole war without a letter from me. One day or other, I will have a long gazette to myself. I feel that such an opportunity will be given me. I cannot, if I am in the field for glory, be kept out of sight. Probably my services may be forgotten by the great, by the time I get home; but my mind will not forget, nor cease to feel, a degree of consolation and of applause, superior to undeserved rewards. Wherever there is any thing to be done, there Providence is sure to direct my steps. Credit must be given me in spite of envy. Even the French respect me. Their minister at Genoa, in answering a note of mine, when returning some wearing apparel which had been taken, said, 'Your nation, sir, and mine are made to show examples of generosity, as well as of valour, to all the people of the earth.' The following is a copy of the note I had sent him: 'Ge-

Expedition against the Island of Capraja.

nerous nations, sir, are above rendering any other damage to individuals than such as the known laws of war prescribe. In a vessel lately taken by my squadron, was found an imperial full of clothes, belonging to a general officer of artillery; I therefore send you the clothes as taken, and some papers which may be useful to the officer, and have to request you will have the goodness to forward them to him.' I will also relate another anecdote, all vanity to myself, but you will partake of it. A person sent me a letter directed as follows, 'Horatio Nelson, Genoa.' On being asked how he could direct in such a manner, his answer in a large party was, 'Sir, there is but one Horatio Nelson in the world.' The letter certainly came immediately.—At Genoa, where I have stopped all their trade, I am beloved and respected both by the senate and the lower order. If any man is fearful of his vessel being stopped, he comes and asks me: if I give him a paper, or say 'all is right,' he is contented. "I am known throughout Italy; not a kingdom or state where my name will be forgotten. This is my gazette."

On the 15th of August, Nelson received an order which appointed him commodore, with a captain under him. It reached him at sea, while going to Bastia, to consult with the viceroy of Corsica on the subject of an expedition against the small island of Capraja. This island, about forty miles distant from Corsica, belonged to the Genoese; and, as well to punish the republic for several flagrant violations of neutrality, as to prevent its falling into the hands of the French, a detachment of troops was embarked, and these, aided by a party of seamen, made themselves masters of the island after a slight resistance. To give the government of Genoa an opportunity to recollect its own interests and those of Italy in general, Sir John Jervis sent the commodore, with a flag

Evacuation of Corsica.

of truce and an offer to restore Capraja, on condition that things should be placed on their former footing : but so completely were the Doge and Senate under the control of France, that this offer led to no result, and Genoa was henceforth to be numbered among the enemies of England.

Spain, also, after having made her peace with France, had been forced by the latter to arm against us. It had been decided by the British cabinet that, in case of this event, Corsica should be abandoned. There existed in that island a very strong republican party ; and every opportunity was seized for sending to it from France succours in men and stores. About the end of September, orders arrived for evacuating the island ; Nelson was directed to superintend the execution of the measure ; and he and the admiral were equally impatient to carry it instantly into effect. For this service the commodore shifted his broad pendant to the *Diadem*, 64, commanded by Captain Towry ; and of the manner in which it was performed, he gave the Duke of Clarence the following particulars.

“ On the 14th of October, I was close in with Bastia before day-light, in the *Diadem*, Captain Towry. Before the ship anchored, I went on shore to the viceroy, landing opposite to his house. I found his excellency very happy at my arrival ; and he immediately requested I would permit his most valuable papers to be sent off in my boat, for it was impossible to say how long they might be safe on shore. The viceroy then told me the state of the town and country ; that a committee of thirty had taken on them the government of the town, had sequestered all the property of the English on shore and in the mole, and also that a plan was laid to seize his person ; that the town was full of armed Corsicans, who had mounted guard at every place, and that our troops

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were in the citadel, except the guard at his house. From the viceroy I went to general De Burgh, passing through the town full of armed men; where I learned that as many armed Corsicans as British were in the citadel; that they had mounted guard with our troops at the citadel gate, on the batteries, barrier gates, and at the storehouses of the government and of the merchants; and that it was necessary for our troops to stand to their arms for self-defence: in short, that there was not a prospect of saving either stores, cannon, or provisions. I submitted to the general the propriety of shutting the citadel gate, in order to prevent any more armed men from getting into it, and that I would moor the ships opposite to the town.

“ On my return from the general and the viceroy, the merchants, owners, and captains of privateers came to me in tears, stating the fact of even a trunk with wearing apparel being refused them, and that they were beggars without my help. A transport's boat had, they said, been refused permission to leave the mole until she was searched, and on nothing being found in her they suffered her to pass; a privateer was moored across the mole-heads. I requested them to be quiet, and nothing should be left undone by me for their relief. About ten A.M. the *Egmont*, Captain Sutton, arrived, which I moored the same as the *Diadem*. At noon, having made the signal for boats manned and armed, I ordered Captain Towry to proceed into the mole with them, and to open the passage for all vessels that chose to come out; with instructions to take the first English vessel he came to in tow: and, if he met with the smallest molestation, he was to send to the municipality in my name, and inform them that if the least impediment were thrown in the way of getting any vessel out of the mole, or in embarking any property belong-

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ing to the English from the town, I would instantly batter it down. Captain Sutton very handsomely went to Towry's assistance; for, on the approach of the latter to the mole, the privateer pointed her guns, and a hundred muskets were levelled from the mole-head. On this Captain Sutton sent my message, and, pulling out his watch, gave them one quarter of an hour for an answer, when, in five minutes, the ships would open their fire. Upon this the people on board the privateer and from the mole-heads, even to the Corsican sentries, quitted the place with the utmost precipitation, and, of course, every vessel came out of the mole.

“ In the afternoon an owner of a privateer came to me to say he had forty hogsheads of tobacco, with various other goods, in the custom-house, and that the municipality refused to deliver them. I directed him to go to the committee, and say I sent him for his goods, which if not instantly delivered, I would open my fire. In five minutes he returned with the keys, and said the committee turned as white as a sheet, said not a word, but gave him the keys. At night, they made an effort to get duty paid for some wine landed, and, of course, going to be embarked, by an English merchant. I had only occasion to send word that I would pay them a disagreeable visit if I had any more complaints. This was a last effort: from that moment not an armed man was seen in the street. Bastia never had been, it was acknowledged, so quiet and orderly since we have been in possession of the island.

“ The viceroy consented to go on board my ship that night, which took off from the general and myself all concern for his safety. On the 15th in the morning, I landed my troops to take post at the viceroy's house, which covered our embarking place, and a hundred seamen as a working party: the general

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ordered about another hundred men from the troops, for the same purpose, and the rest kept post in the citadels. We set heartily to work, and continued without intermission until the 19th at sunset, when I calculated we had saved about £200,000 sterling worth of cannon, powder, stores, and provisions, exclusive of baggage, household stuff, &c. for the poor *émigrés* could not afford to leave a rag. Our boats never ceased night nor day.

“ On the 18th, the French had landed troops near Cape Corse, about 36 miles from Bastia. On the 19th they sent a message to the municipality, desiring to know how they intended to receive them: if as friends, they demanded that the English should be prevented from embarking. In this state nothing more could be attempted to be saved: therefore, at twelve at night, our troops quitted the citadel, first spiking the guns, and came to the north end of the town, where there is an open line of ground on which they could act in case of being attacked. The French, passing at the back of the town, were in the citadel at one A.M. From its blowing a gale of wind, it was the dawn of day when the general and myself went into the barge, not one man being left ashore, and we took with us the two field-pieces brought down to cover our retreat.”

Nelson himself was the last person who left the shore. On stepping into his boat, he turned round to the Corsican mob, and exclaimed: “ Now, John Corse, follow the natural bent of your detestable character — plunder and revenge !” Notwithstanding this severe censure, he does the Corsicans the justice to acknowledge, in the letter so largely quoted above, that there was not one of them but wept on parting with the viceroy, who was beloved and respected even by those who had opposed his administration; that dread of the French was more predominant in

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their minds than dislike of the English; and that to this cause were to be attributed the hostile dispositions which they had at first manifested. At this time the Spanish fleet was actually off Cape Corse, but, having a fair wind, before night the commodore had every vessel safely moored in Porto Ferrajo.

“I have seen the first and the last of Corsica,” he writes a few days afterwards to Captain Locker. “Its situation certainly was most desirable for us; but the generality of its inhabitants are so greedy of wealth and so jealous of each other, that it would have required the patience of Job and the riches of Cræsus to satisfy them. They acknowledge they are only to be ruled by the governing power, destroying all its enemies and bribing all its friends.”

The humiliating evacuation of Corsica was only a preliminary to another measure, which had been determined on by the British ministers, and which wounded the patriotic pride of Nelson much more deeply. Knowing the greatly inferior force of the fleet under Sir John Jervis to that which was likely to be opposed to him, on the expected junction of the French and Spanish squadrons, they sent orders to the admiral to leave the Mediterranean. The commodore not only felt this retreat as a national disgrace, but he was aware of the effect which it must produce upon such of the Italian princes whose dominions had not yet been overrun by the French. In a letter to Mrs. Nelson, he says: “We are all preparing to leave the Mediterranean—a measure which I cannot approve. They at home do not know what this fleet is capable of performing—any thing and every thing. Much as I shall rejoice to see England, I lament our present orders in sackcloth and ashes, so dishonourable to the dignity of England, whose fleets are equal to meet the world in arms; and, of all the fleets I ever saw, I never beheld one in point of officers and

Nelson is ordered to convey the troops from Porto Ferrajo.

men equal to Sir John Jervis's, who is a commander-in-chief able to lead them to glory."

On leaving Porto Ferrajo, the commodore rejoined Sir John Jervis in the bay of St. Fiorenzo, and proceeded with him to Gibraltar. On his way thither, he writes to Captain Locker, observing, with evident exaltation, that, as soon as the fleet should be united by the expected junction of the force under Admiral Mann, he had no doubt that they should look out for the combined fleet of the enemy, who he supposed were about thirty-four sail of the line, badly manned and worse officered, "while our's," he adds, "is such a fleet as I never before saw at sea. There is nothing hardly beyond our reach." And on the same subject he says to the Duke of Clarence, "We shall then be twenty-two sail of such ships as England hardly ever produced, and commanded by an admiral who will not fail to look the enemy in the face, be their force what it may."

After landing on the 11th of November at Minorca, where the commodore observes they were on shore "upon velvet," the fleet proceeded to Gibraltar, where, on the 10th of December, Nelson received directions to hoist his broad pendant on board the *Minerve* frigate, Captain Cockburn, to take the *Blanche*, Captain Preston, under his command, and to proceed with them to Porto Ferrajo, in order, with the assistance of the ships in that port, to convey the troops and stores which had been landed there to Gibraltar and Lisbon. On his passage thither, on the night of the 19th of December, he fell in with two Spanish frigates; he immediately attacked the largest ship, which carried the poop-light, and directed the *Blanche* to bear down and engage the other. At forty minutes past ten at night the commodore brought the enemy to close action, which continued without intermission until half-past one.

Action with two Spanish Frigates.

Notwithstanding the superior force of the Spanish vessel, the fire of the *Minerve* was maintained with such effect, that *La Sabina*, of 40 guns, twenty-eight of which were eighteen-pounders, struck to the *Minerve*. *La Sabina* was commanded by Don Jacobo Stuart, who had 164 men killed and wounded during the action, in which he lost his mizen-mast. On board the *Minerve* seven men were killed and 34 wounded; all her masts were shot through, and the rigging much damaged.

Scarcely was this victory obtained, the prize taken in tow, and the captain, the only surviving officer, removed to the *Minerve*, when a frigate was seen advancing, at four in the morning of the 20th, and, by her signals, was discovered to be Spanish. At half-past four she came to action with the *Minerve*, who cast off the prize, which, under the command of Lieutenant Culverhouse, was directed to stand to the southward. After a trial of strength of more than an hour, the enemy hauled off, "or, I am confident," says the commodore, "she would have shared the fate of her companion." At this time three other ships were seen standing for the *Minerve*; and at the dawn of day the commodore had the mortification to perceive that they were two Spanish ships of the line and two frigates, and that the *Blanche* was far to windward. Notwithstanding all the exertions of the officers and men belonging to the *Minerve* to repair the damages that ship had sustained, all their labours would probably have been ineffectual for her preservation, had they not been assisted by a diversion of the lieutenant placed in the prize. A frigate repeatedly fired into her without effect; and at length the Spanish admiral quitted the pursuit of the commodore for that of *La Sabina*, which steered a different course, evidently with the intention of attracting the notice of the enemy; nor did she surrender till

Nelson's Treatment of his Prisoners.

after the loss of her remaining masts. In the mean time *La Blanche* had silenced her antagonist; but, owing to the same unfortunate circumstances, had been prevented from taking possession of her prize.

The gallant commodore was much less chagrined at the loss of the two prizes than at the captivity of his brave officers and men who were on board *La Sabina*. He restored his sword to the brave Don, Jacobo Stuart, and lost no time in sending a flag of truce, with all his Spanish prisoners, to the captain-general of Carthagena, requesting him to send to Gibraltar the English taken in *La Sabina* in their stead. Not content with this single application, he addressed another to the Spanish admiral, Mareno, in which he bore most honourable testimony to the merits of an unfortunate adversary. "I cannot," he says, "allow Don Jacobo Stuart to return to you, without expressing my admiration of his gallant conduct. To you, who have seen the state of his ship, it is needless to mention the impossibility of her longer defence. I have lost many brave men; but in our masts I was most fortunate, or, probably, I should have had the honour of your acquaintance. But it pleased God to order it otherwise, for which I am thankful. I have endeavoured to make Don Jacobo's captivity as easy as possible; and I rely on your generosity for reciprocal treatment towards my brave officers and men, your prisoners." With an enemy proverbial for generosity, such an appeal could not fail to be successful. Lieutenants Culverhouse and Hardy, with all the seamen of the *Minerve* taken in *La Sabina*, were liberated, and sent as he desired to Gibraltar.

At Porto Ferrajo, Nelson was detained longer than he expected by the unwillingness of General de Burgh to withdraw the army from Elba, until he should have received orders to that effect from England. This

Nelson falls in with the Spanish Fleet.

delay irritated and depressed the mind of the commodore, who was impatient to rejoin the admiral, lest a general engagement should take place in his absence. Having withdrawn the naval establishment, and received Sir Gilbert Elliot, and Lieutenant-colonel Drinkwater, late military secretary of Corsica, on board the *Minerve*, the commodore sailed from Porto Ferrajo on the 29th of January, with some other ships of war and twelve sail of transports.

Having reconnoitred the principal ports of the enemy in the Mediterranean, the commodore arrived at Gibraltar, where his impatience to rejoin Sir John Jervis permitted him to remain only one day. There he took on board Lieutenants Culverhouse and Hardy, and the seamen who had been taken in *La Sabina*. Proceeding thence to the westward, on the 11th of February, he was chased by two Spanish line of battle ships, and at the mouth of the Straits fell in with their whole fleet, which had come out of Carthage. The commodore fortunately escaped, and on the 13th he joined the admiral off Cape St. Vincent. He immediately communicated the intelligence relative to the force and state of the enemy, and shifted his pendant on board his former ship, the *Captain*. He had scarcely removed from the *Minerve*, when the signal was thrown out for the British fleet to prepare for action, and the ships were directed to keep close order during the night.

The anxious hours of this night, until the dawn of the 14th, were passed by the admiral in meditating a design which the most resolute spirit would have hesitated to adopt, without that reliance on the zeal, discipline, and valour of his fleet, and the attachment both of his officers and men, which Sir John Jervis had gained. "The honour of his Majesty's arms, and the circumstances of the war in those seas, requiring a considerable degree of enterprise," formed

Situation of the Spanish Admiral.

the official defence of the admiral against the apparent temerity of assailing an enemy so much his superior. A safe and skilful retreat would have satisfied both the expectation of the country and the ambition of an ordinary commander.

The situation of the Spanish admiral, Don Jose de Cordova, was not less critical, notwithstanding his superior force. He had sailed from Carthagena on the 4th of February, and passed Gibraltar on the 5th; when he heard from an American, who had fallen in with the British squadron on the preceding day, that it consisted of nine ships of the line only, which was indeed the fact at the time, as Admiral Parker, with a reinforcement of five ships, and the Culloden, which had parted company in chace on the 1st of February, had not then joined. This information had induced the Spanish admiral to seek an engagement with an enemy whom he deemed so inferior. At break of day on the 14th, a fog at first concealed from him the exact number of the English squadron; and afterwards, when the signal was made from one of his own look-out ships that the British fleet was at no great distance, the Spanish admiral, relying on the information which he had received from the American, and underrating the British force, paid no attention to it, but suffered his ships to remain too far extended, and in a certain degree of disorder. The look-out ship, finding her signal disregarded, in order to rouse the admiral, as her captain afterwards declared, made a signal that 'the English consisted of forty sail of the line.' This unexpected information produced more than its intended effect: it perplexed and confounded the commander-in-chief, and spread a general alarm throughout the Spanish fleet.

Though, on the arrival of the *Minerve*, the *Lively* frigate, commanded by Lord Garlies, had been directed to proceed to England with Sir Gilbert Elliot

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and the gentlemen of his suite, yet at the joint solicitation of the late viceroy of Corsica, and the captain of the *Lively*, who were desirous of waiting the issue of the engagement, she was permitted to remain, and acted as a repeating frigate during the action. This circumstance enabled Lieutenant-Colonel Drinkwater to describe that interesting scene with a precision to which any person engaged in the conflict could not have pretended.

Whilst this trepidation pervaded the enemy's fleet, Sir John Jervis had anxiously awaited the dawn of day. During the night his ships had been kept in the most compact order of sailing, so that every one of them might have been hailed from the ship next to her. "The British fleet," to adopt the words of Colonel Drinkwater, "consisted of fifteen sail of the line, four frigates, a sloop, and a cutter; the Spanish fleet of twenty-seven sail of the line, ten frigates, and a brig. At day-break on the 14th, the British fleet was in complete order, formed in two divisions, standing on a wind to the south south-west. The morning was hazy. About half-past six the Culloden, Captain Troubridge, made the signal for five sail in the south-west by south quarter, which was soon afterwards confirmed by the *Lively* and *Niger* frigates, and that the strange sail were by the wind on the starboard tack. The *Bonne Citoyenne* sloop was therefore directed to reconnoitre. At a quarter past eight, the squadron was ordered by signal to form in close order, and, a few minutes afterwards, the signal was repeated to prepare for battle. About half-past nine, the *Culloden*, *Blenheim*, and *Prince George*, were ordered to chase in the south and by west quarter; which, on the *Bonne Citoyenne* making a signal that she saw eight sail in that quarter, were strengthened by the *Irresistible*, *Colossus*, and *Orion*. A little past ten, the *Minerve* made the signal for

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twenty sail in the south-west quarter, and, a few minutes after, of eight sail in the south by west. Half an hour afterwards, the *Bonne Citoyenne* made the signal that she could distinguish sixteen, and, immediately afterwards, twenty-five, of the strange ships to be of the line. The enemy's fleet were indeed now become visible to all the British squadron.

“The ships first discovered by the *Culloden* were separated from their main body, which, being to windward, were bearing down in some confusion, with a view of joining their separated ships. It appeared to have been the British admiral's intention, on discovering the separated ships of the enemy's fleet, to have cut them off, if possible, before the main body could arrive to their assistance; and with this view the fast-sailing ships of his squadron were ordered to chase. Assured now of the near position of the main body, he probably judged it most advisable to form his fleet into the line of battle; and the signal was made for their forming the line of battle ahead and astern, as most convenient. A signal was made, directing the squadron to steer south south-west.

“About twenty minutes past eleven, the admiral pointed out that the *Victory*, his flag-ship, would take her station next to the *Colossus*. Some variation in steering was afterwards directed, in order to let the rear ships close up. At twenty-six minutes past eleven, the admiral communicated his intention to pass through the enemy's line, hoisting his large flag and ensign; and soon after the signal was made to engage.

“The British van by this time had approached the enemy; and the distinction of leading the British line into action fell to the lot of the *Culloden*, commanded by Captain Troubridge. About half-past eleven the firing commenced from the *Culloden*, against the

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headmost ships to windward. As the British squadron advanced, the action became more general; and it was soon apparent that the British admiral had accomplished his design of passing through the enemy's line.

“The animated and regular fire of the British squadron was but feebly returned by the enemy's ships to windward; which, being frustrated in their attempts to join the separated ships, had been obliged to haul their wind on the larboard tack. Those to leeward, and which were most effectually cut off from their main body, attempted also to form on their larboard tack, apparently with a determination of either passing through, or to leeward of, our line, and joining their friends: but the warm reception they met with from the centre ships of our squadron soon obliged them to put about; and, excepting one, the whole sought safety in flight, and did not again appear in the action till the close of the day. This single ship, which persevered in passing to leeward of the British line, was so covered with smoke that her intention was not discovered till she had reached the rear; when she was not permitted to pass without notice, but received the fire of our sternmost ships; and, as she luffed round the rear, the *Lively* and other frigates had also the honour of exchanging several broadsides with this two-decker.

“Sir John Jervis, having effected his first purpose, now directed his whole attention to the enemy's main body to windward, consisting at this time of eighteen sail of the line. At eight minutes past twelve, the signal was therefore made for the British fleet to tack in succession; and soon after the signal for again passing the enemy's line. The Spanish admiral's plan seemed to be to join his ships to leeward, by wearing round the rear of our line; and the ships which had passed and exchanged shot with our

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squadron had actually borne up with this view. This design, however, was frustrated by the timely opposition of Commodore Nelson, whose station in the rear of the British line afforded him an opportunity of observing this manœuvre: his ship, the Captain, had no sooner passed the rear of the enemy's ships that were to windward, than he ordered her to wear, and stood on the other tack towards the enemy.

“ In executing this bold and decisive manœuvre, the commodore reached the sixth ship from the enemy's rear, which bore the Spanish admiral's flag, the Santissima Trinidad, of 136 guns, a ship of four decks, reported to be the largest in the world. Notwithstanding the inequality of force, the commodore immediately engaged this colossal opponent; and for a considerable time had to contend, not only with her, but with her seconds ahead and astern, each of three decks. While he maintained this unequal combat, which was viewed with admiration, mixed with anxiety, his friends were flying to his support; the enemy's attention was soon directed to the Culloden, Captain Troubridge, and, in a short time after, to the Blenheim, of 90 guns, Captain Frederick, who opportunely came to his assistance.

“ The intrepid conduct of the commodore staggered the Spanish admiral, who already appeared to waver in pursuing his intention of joining the ships cut off by the British fleet; when the Culloden's timely arrival, and Captain Troubridge's spirited support of the commodore, together with the approach of the Blenheim, followed by Rear-Admiral Parker, with the Prince George, Orion, Irresistible, and Diadem, not far distant, determined the Spanish admiral to change his design altogether, and to throw out the signal for the ships of the main body to haul their wind, and to make sail on the larboard tack.

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“ Not a moment was lost in improving the advantage now apparent in favour of the British squadron : as the ships of Rear-Admiral Parker’s division approached the enemy’s ships in support of the Captain (Commodore Nelson’s ship) and her gallant seconds, the *Blenheim* and *Culloden*, the cannonade became more animated and impressive. In this manner did Commodore Nelson engage a Spanish three-decker, until he had nearly expended all the ammunition in his ship, which had suffered the loss of her fore-top mast, and received such considerable damage in her sails and rigging, that she was almost rendered *hors du combat*. At this critical period the Spanish three-decker, having lost her mizen-mast, fell on board a Spanish two-decker, of 84 guns, that was her second : this latter ship, consequently, now became the commodore’s opponent, and a most vigorous fire was kept up for some time by both ships, within pistol-shot.

“ It was now that the commodore’s ship lost many men, and that the damages already sustained, through the long and arduous conflict which she had maintained, appeared to render a continuance of the contest in the usual way precarious, or perhaps impossible. At this critical moment, the commodore, from a sudden impulse, instantly resolved on a bold and decisive measure, and determined, whatever might be the event, to attempt his opponent sword in hand :—the boarders were summoned, and orders given to lay his ship on board the enemy.

“ Fortune favours the brave ; nor, on this occasion, was she unmindful of her favourite. Ralph Willett Miller, the commodore’s captain, so judiciously directed the course of his ship, that he laid her aboard the starboard quarter of the Spanish eighty-four :—her sprit-sail yard passing over the enemy’s poop, and hooking in her mizen shrouds ; when, the word

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to board being given, the officers and seamen destined for this perilous duty, headed by Lieutenant Edward Berry, together with the detachment of the 69th regiment, commanded by Lieutenant Pearson, then doing duty as marines, on board the Captain, passed with rapidity on board the enemy's ship; and, in a short time, the *San Nicolas* was in the possession of her intrepid assailants. The commodore's ardour would not permit him to remain an inactive spectator of this scene. He was aware the attempt was hazardous, and he thought his presence might animate his brave companions, and contribute to the success of this bold enterprize: he, therefore, as if by magic impulse, accompanied the party in this attack, passing from the fore-chains of his own ship into the enemy's quarter gallery, and thence through the cabin to the quarter-deck, where he arrived in time to receive the sword of the dying commander, who had been mortally wounded by the boarders. He had not been long employed in taking the necessary measures to secure this hard-earned conquest, when he found himself engaged in a more arduous task. The stern of the three-decker, his former opponent, was placed directly amidship of the weather-beam of the prize *San Nicolas*, and, from her poop and galleries, the enemy sorely annoyed with musquetry the British who had boarded the *San Nicolas*. The commodore was not long in resolving on the conduct to be adopted on this momentous occasion; the two alternatives that presented themselves to his unshaken mind were to quit the prize, or instantly board the three-decker. Confident in the bravery of his seamen, he determined on the latter. Directing, therefore, an additional number of men to be sent from the Captain on board the *San Nicolas*, the undaunted commodore, whom no danger ever appalled, headed himself the assailants in this new attack,

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exclaiming :—' WESTMINSTER ABBEY, OR GLORIOUS VICTORY !'

“ Success in a few minutes, and with little loss, crowned the enterprize. Such, indeed, was the panic occasioned by his preceding conduct, that the British no sooner appeared on the quarter-deck of their new opponent, than the commandant advanced, and, asking for the British commanding officer, dropped on one knee, and presented his sword; apologizing, at the same time, for the Spanish admiral's not appearing, as he was dangerously wounded. For a moment Commodore Nelson could scarcely persuade himself of the reality of this second instance of good fortune: he, therefore, ordered the Spanish commandant, who had the rank of a brigadier, to assemble the officers on the quarter-deck, and to direct means to be taken instantly for communicating to the crew the surrender of the ship. All the officers immediately appeared; and the commodore had the surrender of the *San Josef* duly confirmed, by each of them delivering his sword.

“ The coxswain of the commodore's barge had attended close by his side throughout this perilous attempt. To him the commodore gave in charge the swords of the Spanish officers as he received them; and the undaunted tar, as they were delivered to him, tucked these honourable trophies under his arm with all the coolness imaginable. It was at this moment also, that a British sailor, who had long fought under the commodore, came up in the fulness of his heart, and, excusing the liberty he was taking, asked to shake him by the hand, to congratulate him upon seeing him safe on the quarter-deck of a Spanish three-decker.

“ This new conquest had scarcely submitted, and the commodore returned on board the *San Nicolas*, when the latter ship was discovered to be on fire in

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two places. At the first moment appearances were alarming; but presence of mind and resources were not wanting to the British officers in this emergency. The firemen were immediately ordered from the Captain; and, proper means being taken, the fires were soon got under.

“A signal was now made by the Captain for boats to assist in separating her from her two prizes; and, as she was incapable of farther service until refitted, the commodore again hoisted his pendant for the moment on board the *Minerve* frigate; and in the evening shifted it to the *Irresistible*, Captain Martin.

“Four of the enemy’s ships were now in possession of the British squadron — two of three decks, the *Salvador del Mundo*, and the *San Josef*, of 112 guns each; the *San Nicolas*, of 84, and the *San Ysidro*, of 74; and the van of the British line still continued to press hard the *Santissima Trinidad* and others in the rear of the enemy’s flying fleet. The close of the day, before the four prizes were secured, undoubtedly saved the Spanish admiral’s flag from falling into the hands of the victors. The *Santissima Trinidad*, in which he carried it, had been so much the object of attention, that the ship was a perfect wreck when the action ceased. Many indeed aver that she actually struck both her flag and ensign, hoisting a white flag as a signal of submission; but, as she continued her course, and afterwards hoisted a Spanish jack, others doubt this circumstance. It is however an indisputable truth, that her fire had been silent some time before this event is reported to have occurred. It was a defensive combat entirely on their parts, after Commodore Nelson obliged them to haul their wind on the larboard tack.”

Even after this circumstantial account of this splendid victory, Nelson’s own narrative of his share

Nelson's Account of the Battle of St. Vincent.

in it, addressed to the Duke of Clarence, will not be deemed superfluous. He has entitled it,

“A FEW REMARKS RELATIVE TO MYSELF IN THE CAPTAIN,
IN WHICH SHIP MY PENDANT WAS FLYING ON THE
MOST GLORIOUS VALENTINE'S DAY, 1797.

“ At one, P.M. the Captain having passed the sternmost of the enemy's ships, which formed their van and part of their centre, consisting of seventeen sail of the line, they on the larboard, we on the starboard tack, the admiral made the signal to tack in succession; but, perceiving all the Spanish ships to bear up before the wind, evidently with an intention of forming their line, going large, joining their separated divisions, at that time engaged with some of our centre ships, or flying from us; to prevent either of their schemes from taking effect, I ordered the ship to be wore, and, passing between the Diadem and the Excellent, at a quarter past one o'clock, was engaged with the headmost, and, of course, leewardmost, of the Spanish division. The ships which I knew were the Santissima Trinidad, 136; San Josef, 112; Salvador del Mundo, 112; San Nicolas, 80; another first-rate, and a 74, names unknown.

“ I was immediately joined and most nobly supported by the Culloden, Captain Troubridge; the Spanish fleet not wishing, I suppose, to have a decisive battle, hauled to the wind on the larboard tack, which brought the ships above-mentioned to be the leewardmost and sternmost ships in their fleet. For near an hour, I believe, (but do not pretend to be correct as to time), did the Culloden and Captain support this apparently, but not really, unequal contest: when the Blenheim, passing between us and the enemy, gave us a respite, and sickened the Dons.

“ At this time the Salvador del Mundo and San Isidro dropped astern, and were fired into in a mas-

Nelson's Account of the Battle of St. Vincent.

terly style by the Excellent, Captain Collingwood,* who compelled the San Isidro to hoist English colours; and I thought the large ship, Salvador del Mundo, had also struck; but Captain Collingwood, disdain- ing the parade of taking possession of a vanquished enemy, most gallantly pushed up, with every sail set, to save his old friend and messmate, who was, to appearance, in a critical state; the Blenheim being ahead, the Culloden crippled and astern. The Ex- cellent ranged up within two feet of the San Nicolas, giving a most tremendous fire. The San Nicolas luffing up, the San Josef fell on board her; and the Excellent passing on for the Santissima Trinidad, the Captain resumed her station abreast of them, and close alongside; at this time the Captain having lost her fore-top mast, not a sail, shroud, nor rope left, her wheel shot away, and incapable of farther service in the line, or in the chase, I directed Captain Miller to put the helm a-starboard, and, calling for the boarders, ordered them to board.

“The soldiers of the 69th, with an alacrity which will ever do them credit, and Lieutenant Pearson, of the same regiment, were almost the foremost in this service; the first man who jumped into the mizen chains was Captain Berry, late my first lieutenant, (Captain Miller was in the very act of going also, but I ordered him to remain :) he was supported from our sprit-sail yard, which hooked in the mizen rigging. A soldier of the 69th regiment having broken the upper quarter-gallery window, I jumped in myself, and was followed by others as fast as possible. I found the cabin-doors fastened, and some Spanish officers fired their pistols; but, having broken open the doors, the soldiers fired; and the Spanish brigadier (commander with a distinguishing pendant), fell, as retreating to the quarter-deck. I pushed imme-

* Portrait in the Painted Hall, Greenwich.

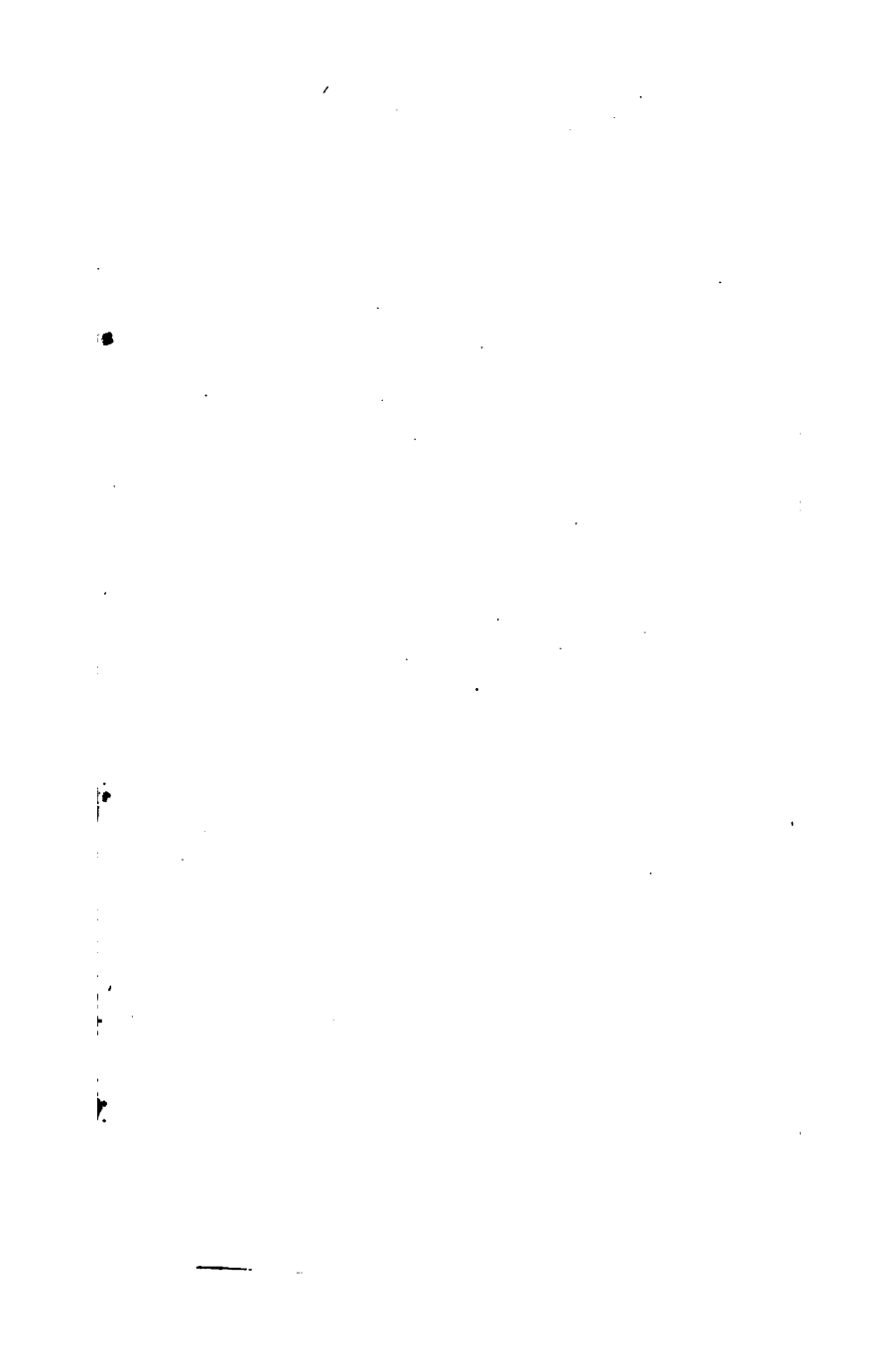
 Nelson's Account of the Battle of St. Vincent.

diately onwards for the quarter-deck, where I found Captain Berry in possession of the poop, and the Spanish ensign hauling down. I passed with my people, and Lieutenant Pearson, on the larboard gang-way, to the fore-castle, where I met two or three Spanish officers, prisoners to my seamen; they delivered me their swords. A fire of pistols, or muskets, opening from the admiral's stern-gallery of the San Josef, I directed the soldiers to fire into her stern; and, calling to Captain Miller, ordered him to send more men into the San Nicolas; and directed my people to board the first-rate, which was done in an instant, Captain Berry assisting me in the main-chains.* At this moment a Spanish officer looked over the quarter-deck rail, and said they had surrendered. From this most welcome intelligence it was not long before I was on the quarter-deck, where the Spanish captain, with a bow, presented me with his sword, and said the admiral was dying of his wounds. I asked him, on his honour, if the ship was surrendered; he declared she was: on which I gave him my hand, and desired him to call his officers and ship's company, and tell them of it; which he did — and on the quarter-deck of a Spanish first-rate, extravagant as the story may seem, did I receive the

* A well-executed painting of the boarding of the San Josef from the San Nicolas is in the Painted Hall, Greenwich: the likeness of Nelson is spirited and excellent, but there is more of imagination than reality in the picture. There appears also to be some confusion in the above account. Colonel Drinkwater says: "The stern of the three-decker was placed directly amidship of the weather-beam of the prize, San Nicolas," &c. Nelson also speaks of "the fire of pistols and musketry from the stern gallery of the San Josef;" but immediately afterwards adds that 'Captain Berry assisted him in the main-chains.' From what follows it would appear that the main-chains of the San Josef is meant, and consequently the ships must have dropped alongside of each other at the time of boarding.—THE OLD SAILOR.



H.M.S. CAPTAIN boarding the SAN NICOLAS and SAN JOSEPH.



Nelson's Account of the Battle of St. Vincent.

swords of vanquished Spaniards, which, as I received, I gave to William Fearney, one of my bargemen, who put them, with the greatest *sang froid*, under his arm. I was surrounded by Captain Berry, Lieutenant Pearson of the 69th regiment, John Sykes, John Thomson, Francis Cook, all old Agamemnonns, and several other brave men, seamen, and soldiers. Thus fell these ships."

"The Victory, passing, saluted us with three cheers, as did every ship in the fleet. The Minerve being sent by the admiral to my assistance, I went on board her, and directed Captain Cockburn to hoist my pendant and carry me to the van, and place me on board any of the line of battle ships then engaged; however, before this could be effected, the signal being made to wear and discontinue the action, I went with Captain Cockburn on board the Victory, when the admiral received me on the quarter-deck, and having embraced me, [Nelson being at the time begrimed with dirt and having great part of his hat shot away] said 'he could not sufficiently thank me,' and used every kind expression which could not fail to make me happy. From the Victory I went to the Irresistible, 74, Captain G. Martin, who was ordered to hoist my pendant, as my own ship was completely disabled, and she was then taken in tow by the Minerve. My bruises now were looked at and found but trifling, and a few days made me as well as ever."

From the preceding narratives, as well Nelson's own as Colonel Drinkwater's, it will be seen that in going into action the commodore ventured to deviate from the order of his commander-in-chief. Southey, we believe, was the first writer who explicitly stated that, by this disobedience of orders, Nelson, in fact, planned as well as accomplished this signal victory. "Perhaps," says that writer, "it was thought proper to pass over this part of his conduct in silence as a

Letter from the Reverend Mr. Nelson.

sure to have it kept than in the capital city of the county in which he had the honour to be born." The freedom of that city was in consequence voted to him.

But, probably, none of these marks of distinction afforded him more real pleasure than the congratulations of his venerable father, who thus expressed himself:—"I thank my God, with all the power of a grateful soul, for the mercies he has most graciously bestowed on me, in preserving you amidst the imminent perils which lately threatened your life at every moment; and, amongst other innumerable blessings, I must not forget the bounty of Heaven in granting you a mind that rejoices in the practice of those eminent virtues which form great and good characters. The height of glory to which your professional judgment, united with a proper degree of bravery, guarded by Providence, has raised you, few sons, my dear child, attain to, and fewer fathers live to see. Tears of joy have involuntarily trickled down my furrowed cheek. Who could stand the force of such general congratulations? The name and services of Nelson have sounded throughout the city of Bath, from the common ballad-singer to the public theatre It gives me inward satisfaction to know that the laurels you have wreathed have sprung from those principles and religious truths which alone constitute the hero; and though a civic crown is all you at present reap, it is to the mind of inestimable value, and I have no doubt will one day bear a golden apple."

Nelson is sent to cruize off Cadiz.

CHAPTER VI.

1797.

NELSON RECEIVES INSTRUCTIONS TO BLOCKADE CADIZ — IS SENT TO BRING AWAY THE TROOPS FROM ELBA — SHIFTS HIS FLAG, AS REAR-ADMIRAL, FROM THE CAPTAIN TO THE THESEUS — APPOINTED TO COMMAND THE INNER SQUADRON BLOCKADING CADIZ — DESPERATE BOAT ACTION IN THE HARBOUR. — BOMBARDMENT OF CADIZ — EXPEDITION AGAINST SANTA CRUZ, IN THE ISLAND OF TENERIFFE — FAILURE OF THE FIRST ATTEMPT — SECOND ATTACK — NELSON IS WOUNDED AND LOSES AN ARM — RETURNS TO ENGLAND — HONOURS CONFERRED ON HIM — APPOINTED TO THE VANGUARD.

WHILE the British fleet was refitting in the Tagus, Nelson was detached with a squadron to cruize off Cadiz. "I am here," says he, in a letter dated Irresistible, off Lagos Bay, March 16, "looking out for the viceroy of Mexico, with three sail of the line, and hope to meet him. Two first-rates and a 74 are with him; but the larger the ships the better the mark. The Spanish fleet," he adds, "is in Cadiz; the officers hooted and pelted by the mobility. Their first report was, the action happening in a foggy day, when the fog cleared up, they only saw fifteen sail of the line, therefore concluded that at least five of our's were sunk in the action." Though the object of this cruize was pursued with the usual ardour of the commodore, (the news of whose promotion had not yet reached him), either the report respecting the viceroy was unfounded or he eluded the vigilance of the squadron, which was joined by Nelson's old ship, the Captain, when he again hoisted his broad pendant on board her. In the beginning of April, the admiral, arriving with the rest of the fleet from Lis-

Nelson shifts his Flag to the Theseus.

bon, gave him instructions to blockade the port of Cadiz as strictly as possible. Nelson wrote in reply that his wishes in regard to the blockade should be fulfilled. At the same time, as he had good reason to believe that the Spanish fleet in Cadiz would not be ready for sea for some months, and he felt extreme anxiety for the safety of the troops still left at Elba, he offered to proceed thither and bring them away. The admiral availed himself of this offer, though he supposed that the troops might then be on their passage to Gibraltar, under the charge of Captain Fremantle, in the Inconstant.

Having performed this service and rejoined his commander, he shifted his flag, as rear-admiral of the blue, from the Captain, on account of the bad state of that ship, to the Theseus, into which he was accompanied by Captain R. W. Miller. He had not been many days on board this new ship, before a circumstance occurred that must have been peculiarly grateful to his feelings. The Theseus, before she left England, had been infected with that mutinous spirit which broke out in the British fleet in the spring of 1797; and, on her first joining the squadron under Sir John Jervis, some apprehensions had been entertained respecting the steadiness of her crew. For this reason, among others, Nelson had selected her to carry his flag: and so powerful was the influence which he gained over the minds of all around him that in a few days every symptom of insubordination disappeared, and he had attached the whole ship's company to him as strongly as if they had been all "old Agamemmons." A paper expressive of this feeling was dropped one night on the quarter-deck. It was signed "Ship's Company," and was to this effect: "Success attend Admiral Nelson! God bless Captain Miller! We thank them for the officers they have placed over us. We are happy and comfortable,

Commands the Squadron blockading Cadiz.

and will shed every drop of blood in our veins to support them, and the name of the Theseus shall be immortalized as high as the Captain's."

Nelson was now appointed to the command of the inner squadron blockading Cadiz, a post of honour well suited to his vigilant and daring spirit. An order from Sir John Jervis directed the launches and barges of two divisions of the fleet to assemble on board the Theseus, between 9 and 10 o'clock every night, armed with carronades, spikes, cutlasses, broad axes, and chopping knives, a clamp in each boat with spikes, a sledge-hammer, and a coil of small rope, to tow off any armed brig, mortar, or gun-boat, that should be carried, and to follow the directions of rear-admiral Nelson for the night. It was the custom of the latter, every night when the boats were on their stations off the mouth of the harbour, to be rowed in his barge through the whole force, and personally to inspect every thing that was going on. The Spaniards also had equipped a number of gun-boats and large launches, in which they rowed guard during the night, to prevent the near approach of the blockaders. On these a vigorous attack was made in the night of the 3^d of July by the British boats, headed by Nelson himself, which pursued the Spaniards close to the walls of Cadiz, and took two mortar-boats and an armed launch. In this conflict it was the admiral's fortune to encounter the barge of Don Miguel Tregoyen, the commander of the Spanish gun-boats. The struggle that ensued was one of the most perilous in which he had ever been engaged. He fought hand to hand with the Spanish commandant, and it was his own opinion that he must have lost his life but for the devoted attachment of his faithful coxswain, John Sykes,*

* This gallant fellow was a native of Lincoln, and was frequently complimented by the admiral, who called him his

Boat Action off Cadiz.

who, after parrying several blows, aimed at his beloved commander, purposely interposed his own head to save him from the stroke of a Spanish sabre. Sir Horatio, who was accompanied by Captain Fremantle, had only his usual complement of 10 men, besides the coxswain, in his barge; his opponent was manned by 26, including officers. After a long and doubtful combat, in which eighteen of the Spaniards were killed and the commandant and all the rest wounded, the rear-admiral carried the enemy's barge.

In answer to the letter in which he acquainted Lord St. Vincent with his success, the commander-in-chief says: "Every service you are engaged in adds fresh lustre to the British arms and to your character." He adds: "The lieutenant who has the greatest merit in taking a brig shall be made captain of her immediately." On which Nelson remarks: "Your encouragement for those lieutenants who may conspicuously exert themselves cannot fail to have its good effect in serving our country; instead of their thinking that if a vessel is taken, it would make the son of some great man a captain in the place of the gallant fellow who captured her.* At present the brigs lie too close to each other to hope for a dash at them, but soon I expect to find one off her guard and then —"

The garrison of Cadiz at this time consisted of

"brave Lincoln friend." Nelson observed that his manners and conduct were so far above his situation that Nature certainly designed him for a gentleman; and, had he served long enough, he would have asked for a lieutenancy for him. Poor Sykes did not live long enough to profit by the gratitude of his commander: he was killed by the bursting of a cannon.

It was this admirable feeling to reward actual merit that made Nelson so much esteemed. He had a most sensitive mind, and keenly felt ingratitude to himself; but it came with double force when shown to any one who served under him.—
THE OLD SAILOR.

Bombardment of Cadiz.

more than 4000 men. On the line wall facing the bay were mounted 70 pieces of cannon and eight mortars; near the Alameda were four other mortars; and from the Capuchins, at the back of the city, to the land point were three batteries of four guns each. Such was the strength of the place when Nelson was ordered to bombard it. The first attempt proved ineffective, as the large mortar had been materially injured in former service. The second produced considerable effect in the town and among the shipping, and ten sail of the line, among them the ships carrying the flags of admirals Masaredo and Gravina, warped out of the range of the shells with much precipitation on the following morning. To rid themselves of this annoyance, the Spaniards promised a thousand piastres to any of their vessels that should take or sink an English sloop, and five thousand, if they should take or sink a bomb-vessel. On the night of the 8th of July, he meditated another operation under his own immediate direction; but the wind blew so strong down the bay, that it was found impossible to bring up the bomb-vessels to the point of attack in time. On the following day, he informed Lord St. Vincent that, though he hoped enough had been done to force out the Spanish fleet, yet, in case there had not, he would try them again, "when," he added, "down comes Cadiz, and not only Cadiz but their fleet, if Masaredo will not come out. As for the ship shot flying about the Theseus, it will do her good and make her the better for your support on so proud a day, not far distant, I hope."

Nelson had some time before proposed to the commander-in-chief an expedition against the town of Santa Cruz, in the island of Teneriffe. Intelligence of the arrival there of a Spanish ship from Manilla, bound to Cadiz, with treasure, hastened the execution of this plan. Lord St. Vincent allowed

Expedition against Santa Cruz.

Sir Horatio to select such ships and officers as he thought proper for this service. The squadron consisted of his own ship, *Theseus*, two other ships of the line, *Culloden*, Captain Troubridge, and *Zealous*, Captain Hood; three frigates, *Seahorse*, Captain Fremantle, *Emerald*, Captain Waller, *Terpsichore*, Captain Bowen, Fox cutter, Lieutenant Gibson, and a mortar-boat, which were afterwards joined by the *Leander*, 50, Captain Thompson. With this force Nelson left the fleet on the 15th of July, having general orders to make a sudden and vigorous assault on the town of Santa Cruz; but on no account to land personally with the forces, which were to be under the command of Captain Troubridge, unless his presence should be absolutely necessary. The plan of this expedition was contrived with all that minuteness and precision which ever marked the operations projected by the rear-admiral. The journal of the proceedings of the squadron on reaching the place of its destination is given in his own words:

“ On Friday the 21st of July, I directed to be embarked on board the *Seahorse*, *Terpsichore*, and *Emerald* frigates, 1000 men, including 250 marines, attended by all the boats of the squadron, scaling ladders, and every implement which I thought necessary for the success of the enterprise. I directed that the boats should land in the night, between the fort on the north-east side of the bay of Santa Cruz and the town, and endeavour to make themselves masters of that fort; which when done, my summons to the governor was to be sent in, and half an hour allowed for its acceptance or rejection. Although the frigates by twelve o'clock approached within three miles of the intended place of debarkation, yet, from the unforeseen circumstances of a strong current against them in-shore, they were not able to get within a mile of the landing-place before the day

Attack of Santa Cruz.

dawned and discovered our force and intentions to the Spaniards. At half past three on the morning of the 22^d, the *Theseus* and squadron bore up for Santa Cruz; and at half past four we saw the *Seahorse*, *Terpsichore*, and *Emerald*, off the island, with the mortar-boat and the ships' boats pulling off shore.

“On my approach, Captains Troubridge and Bowen, with Captain Oldfield of the marines, came on board to consult with me what was best to be done, and were of opinion that, if they could possess themselves of the heights over the fort, it could be stormed: to which I gave my assent. At nine, the frigates anchored in-shore, off the east end of the town, and landed their men. Stood off and on Santa Cruz with the line of battle ships, and wore occasionally. At ten o'clock, made the signal to prepare for battle, intending to batter the fort with the line of battle ships, in order to create a diversion; but this was found impracticable, not being able to get nearer the shore than three miles, from a calm and contrary current: nor could our men possess themselves of the heights, as the enemy had taken possession, and seemed as anxious to retain as we were to get them. Thus foiled in my original plan, I considered it necessary for the honour of our king and country not to give over the attempt to possess ourselves of the town, that our enemies might be convinced there was nothing which Englishmen were not equal to; and, confident in the bravery of those who would be employed in the service, I embarked every person from the shore on the 22^d at night.”

The admiral now resolved on a vigorous attack upon the town and the citadel itself; but, to cover this design, he remained apparently inactive on the 23^d, as if he had abandoned his intentions against the place; and, on the 24th, by approaching and an-

Attack of Santa Cruz.

choring to the northward of the town, and making every show for a disposition of attacking the heights, he drew the notice of the Spaniards to that quarter, and consequently the real objects of his attack were left more exposed. The *Leander* joined in the afternoon: her marines were added to the force before appointed, and Captain Thompson volunteered his services. Towards evening the squadron anchored a few miles to the northward of Santa Cruz, and at six the signal was made for boats to prepare to proceed on service, as previously ordered.

Before making this last desperate attempt, Sir Horatio agreed to meet some of the captains of his squadron on board the *Seahorse*, where the lady whom Captain Fremantle had lately married, while in the Mediterranean, presided at table. So sensible was he of the extreme danger that awaited him, that, preparatory to leaving the *Theseus*, he had called his step-son, Lieutenant Nisbet, who had the watch on deck, into the cabin, to assist in arranging and burning his mother's letters. Perceiving that the young man was armed, he earnestly begged him to remain behind, saying: "Should we both fall, Josiah, what would become of your poor mother? The care of the *Theseus* falls to you; stay, therefore, and take charge of her." "Sir," replied Nisbet, with the bluntness and decision of a true British sailor, "the ship must take care of herself. I will go with you to-night, if I never go again." Nelson himself was frequently heard to declare, that the sensation which he experienced on going over the ship's side that night to enter his boat was a full conviction that he should never return.

"At eleven o'clock at night," proceeds the Journal already quoted, "the boats of the squadron, containing between 600 and 700 men, with 180 on board the *Fox* cutter, and about 70 or 80 in a boat we had

Nelson is wounded in the Arm.

taken the day before, proceeded in six divisions towards the town. The divisions of the boats were conducted by all the captains, except Fremantle and Bowen, who attended with me to regulate and lead the way to the attack; every captain being acquainted that the landing was to be made on the mole, whence they were to hasten as fast as possible into the great square, and there to form and proceed on such services as might be found necessary. We were not discovered until half past one o'clock, when, being within half gun-shot of the landing place, I directed the boats to cast off from each other, give an huzza, and push for the shore. The alarm-bells immediately rang, and a fire of thirty or forty pieces of cannon, with musquetry from one end of the town to the other, opened upon us; but nothing could stop the intrepidity of the captains leading the divisions. Unfortunately, the night being extremely dark, the greater part of the boats did not see the mole, but went on shore through a raging surf, which stove all the boats to the left of it. It was only Captains Fremantle, Thompson, Bowen, and myself, with four or five boats, who found the mole, which was instantly stormed and carried, although defended apparently by four or five hundred men, and the guns, six 24-pounders, were spiked; but such a heavy fire of musquetry and grape-shot was kept up from the citadel and houses at the head of the mole, that we could not advance, and nearly all were killed or wounded. Having at this moment my right arm shot through, I was carried off to my ship."

At the moment of receiving this wound, Nelson was in the act of stepping out of the boat upon the mole, and of drawing his sword. This sword had been presented to him when very young by his uncle, Captain Suckling, with an injunction that he should

Attention of Lieutenant Nisbet to the Admiral.

not part with it while he lived. It was doubly valued by him, not only on this account, but also, according to family tradition, as having been the same which was borne by the brave Captain Galfri-dus Walpole, a brother of Sir Robert's, when in 1711 he lost his right arm in action with a French squadron in the Mediterranean. In falling back into the boat, he caught with his left hand the sword which had dropped from the other, and kept it firmly grasped. Lieutenant Nisbet, who was close to him when he fell, placed him in the bottom of the boat, and, as the sight of the blood, which flowed copiously from the shattered arm, seemed to increase his faintness, he laid his hat over it to conceal it. He then examined the state of the wound, and bound his silk handkerchief tightly round the arm above the lacerated vessels. Nelson afterwards declared that, but for the presence of mind and attention of his step-son, in this emergency, he must have perished. Nisbet was assisted in his efforts by one of the admiral's bargemen, named Lovell, who tore up his shirt to make a sling for the wounded arm. They then collected five other seamen, with whose assistance the boat, which had grounded from the falling of the tide, was got afloat. Nisbet then took one of the oars that remained, and ordered the steersman to keep close under the guns of the batteries, that they might be safe from their tremendous fire. His voice roused Sir Horatio from his fainting state, and he immediately desired to be lifted up in the boat, "that," to use his own expression, "he might look a little about him." The destructive fire of the enemy, flashing upon the water, amidst the darkness of the night, was sublimely awful, and produced a most painful uncertainty respecting the fate of his brave companions. All at once, a general shriek was heard. It proceeded from the crew of the Fox cut-

Catastrophe of the Fox Cutter.

ter, which, being struck by a shot under water, instantly sunk. One hundred and eighty persons were struggling for their lives. This was a scene of distress too dreadful to be passed by the humane admiral. He ordered as many as the boat could possibly carry to be taken into her; and, forgetting his own sufferings, eagerly assisted himself, with his only remaining arm, in this office of humanity. In spite of all the assistance that could be afforded, 97 men, including Lieutenant Gibson, perished: 83 were saved. Every possible exertion was used to reach the *Theseus*; and so anxious was he to send back the boat in the hope that she might be in time to pick up a few more of the unhappy victims, that, when a chair was called for, he would not wait for that accommodation, but, desiring a single rope to be thrown over the side, he twisted it round his left arm, and jumped up the ship's side with a spirit that astonished every one. He then submitted the wounded limb to amputation, with the same courage and fortitude that had ever marked his character.

About the same time that Nelson received his wound, Captain Bowen fell in storming the mole, and Captain Fremantle, who was severely wounded in the right arm, having met with a boat on the beach, was conveyed to the *Seahorse*. Meanwhile, Captain Troubridge, missing the mole, pushed on shore under the enemy's battery, close to the southward of the citadel; and Captain Waller, with two or three other boats, landed at the same time. The surf was so high that many put back; those which persevered were stove against the rocks, and most of the ammunition in the men's pouches was wet. As soon as Troubridge and Waller could collect a few men, they advanced to the square, the appointed place of rendezvous; and, while waiting there, in hopes of being joined by Nelson and the remainder of the

Failure of the Attack on Santa Cruz.

people, they sent to summon the citadel, against which, however, no immediate attempt could be made, the scaling ladders being all lost in the surf. Being joined by a body of men under Captains Hood and Miller, Troubridge had collected by day-break about 80 marines, 80 pikemen, and 80 small-armed seamen, being all that remained alive of those who had made good their landing. With this force he was advancing to the attack of the citadel, when he found all the streets commanded by field-pieces, and several thousand Spaniards under arms, and approaching by every avenue. Against such a superiority, without ammunition, without provisions, without expectation of being reinforced, it would have been madness to persevere. Accordingly, Troubridge sent Captain Hood with a flag of truce to the Spanish governor, Don Juan Antonio Gutierrez, engaging that, on condition the British troops were permitted to embark without impediment, the squadron off Santa Cruz should no further molest either that town or any of the Canary Islands. The governor replied that, considering all circumstances, the English ought to surrender themselves prisoners of war. Troubridge, whose character for promptness and decision resembled that of his commander, sent back word, that, unless the terms he had offered were accepted in five minutes, he was prepared to burn the town, and he would set it on fire if the Spaniards advanced one inch further; at the same time, he should do so with great regret, as he had no wish to injure the inhabitants. This threat produced compliance on the part of the governor. Troubridge and his brave followers marched through the town with the British colours flying at their head. With a generosity worthy of admiration, the governor furnished the retreating invaders with biscuit and wine, and intimated that the rear-admiral was at liberty to

Loss of the English Squadron in the Attack.

send on shore and purchase whatever refreshment his squadron needed, as long as he remained off the island. The wounded English received the most humane attentions from the Spaniards; and a noble youth, Don Bernardo Collagon, who had, sword in hand, defended his country with great spirit, is said on this occasion to have actually stripped himself of his shirt to make bandages for the wounded captives.

On this disastrous night, the loss of the squadron consisted of 44 killed, 105 wounded, and 101 drowned. In addition to the officers mentioned, Lieutenant Weatherhead, of the *Theseus*, was so severely wounded as to survive but a few days. He was one of those who had commenced their naval career with Nelson in the *Agamemnon*. Though the enterprize was not successful, yet the honour of his Majesty's arms was not tarnished by it; for, as the rear-admiral expressed himself, in his public letter to Lord St. Vincent, 'more daring intrepidity was never shown than by the captains, officers, and men he had the honour to command.' Troubridge was assured by the Spanish officers at Santa Cruz that they expected such a visit, and were perfectly prepared with all the batteries, and with eight thousand men under arms. "This," adds Troubridge, "with the great disadvantage of a rocky coast, high surf, and in the face of forty pieces of cannon, will show, though we were not successful, what an Englishman is equal to."

It is evident, however, that this failure was most keenly felt by Nelson, whose private communication to the admiral, written only two days after the event, shows the extreme dejection which anguish of mind and body had produced. "I am become a burden to my friends," he says, "and useless to my country; but by my letter wrote the 24th, you will perceive my anxiety for the promotion of my son-in-law, Josiah Nisbet: when I leave your command, I become

Nelson sails for England in the Seahorse.

dead to the world ; I go hence, and am no more seen : if, from poor Bowen's loss, you think it proper to oblige me, I rest confident you will do it : the boy is under obligations to me, but he repaid me by bringing me from the mole of Santa Cruz. I hope you will be able to give me a frigate to convey the remains of my carcase to England." " My dear admiral," replied Lord St. Vincent, " mortals cannot command success ; you and your companions have certainly deserved it by the greatest degree of heroism and perseverance that ever was exhibited. I grieve for the loss of your arm, and for the fate of poor Bowen and Gibson, with that of the other brave men who fell so gallantly. I hope you and Captain Fremantle are doing well ; the Seahorse shall carry you to England the moment her wants are supplied. All the wishes you may favour me with shall be fulfilled, as far as is consistent with what I owe to some valuable officers in the Ville de Paris."

Accordingly, as soon as the Seahorse was properly equipped for the voyage, Nelson sailed in her for England, and on his arrival at Spithead received permission from the Admiralty, on the 2^d of September, to strike his flag. He instantly set out for Bath, where his father and Lady Nelson then were. He had previously written to them to acquaint them with his misfortune. The difference of the handwriting at first perplexed them, and it was some time before Lady Nelson discovered, to her inexpressible anguish, that the letter was actually written by her husband. They had heard of an expedition on which part of Lord St. Vincent's fleet had been detached, and painful rumours were in circulation. Neither of them had the resolution to read the letter, the extraordinary change in the well-known handwriting having created an uncertainty that left room for the worst apprehensions. At last, Mrs. Bolton, who

Nelson's Sufferings from his Wound.

was on a visit to her father, at his request communicated its contents. She was sincerely attached to her brother, and for some time their affectionate sympathy rendered them insensible to the joy of his return. While they were alternately expecting and despairing of his arrival, Lady Nelson one evening distinguished her husband's voice directing his carriage where to stop; and in another moment he was pressed to the hearts of his beloved relatives and of the faithful partner of his early and more humble fortunes. About the middle of September, he proceeded to London. Apartments were engaged for him in Bond Street, and there he was attended by Dr. Moseley, who had accompanied the expedition to the River San Juan, Cruikshank, the eminent surgeon, and other gentlemen of the faculty.

In consequence of a nerve having been improperly included by the surgeon who performed the amputation in one of the ligatures employed for securing a bleeding artery — which ligature, according to the custom of the French surgeons, was of silk instead of waxed thread — a constant irritation and discharge were kept up; and the ends of the ligature being daily pulled to effect their separation, caused the severest agony to the heroic sufferer, who had scarcely any intermission of pain, either by night or day. His excellent spirits, however, did not forsake him; and the wound was unattended with the slightest fever, a very unusual circumstance on such an occasion.

Nelson had already acquired such popularity that the whole nation might be said to have participated in his sufferings. He received the most flattering attentions from the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Clarence, and other illustrious persons. Friends flocked around him; his relatives hastened from the country to attend and console him, and Mr. Bolton,

Nelson's Memorial to the King.

in particular, was his constant companion. He was presented with the freedom of the cities of London and Bristol, and invested by his sovereign with the insignia of the Order of the Bath.

As a small compensation for a whole life of danger, hardship, enterprize, and service, his majesty conferred on him a pension of £1000 per annum. Previously to the issuing of this grant, a positive custom required that he should distinctly state his services in a memorial to his majesty; and one more brilliant never met the eye of the sovereign of a brave nation. It set forth "That, during the present war, your memorialist has been in four actions with the fleets of the enemy; namely, on the 13th and 14th of March, 1795, on the 13th of July, 1795, and on the 14th of February, 1797; in three actions with frigates, in six engagements against batteries; in ten actions in boats, employed in cutting out of harbours, in destroying vessels, and in taking three towns. Your memorialist has also served on shore four months, and commanded the batteries at the sieges of Bastia and Calvi: that, during the war, he has assisted at the capture of seven sail of the line, six frigates, four corvettes, and eleven privateers of different sizes; and taken and destroyed near fifty merchant vessels; and your memorialist has actually been engaged against the enemy upwards of *one hundred and twenty* times. In which service your memorialist has lost his right eye and right arm, and been severely wounded and bruised in his body; all of which services and wounds your memorialist most humbly submits to your Majesty's most gracious consideration."

His wound kept him for some months in a state of constant suffering. One day, in the month of October, when he had endured more than usual pain, he retired early in the evening to bed, hoping, with the aid of laudanum, to obtain a little rest; when

His Recovery and Thanksgiving.

the metropolis was thrown into an uproar by the joyful news of Admiral Duncan's victory over the Dutch fleet. The mob knocked violently and repeatedly at the door of the house where he lodged, because it was not illuminated. On being informed that Sir Horatio Nelson, who had been so badly wounded, lodged there and could not be disturbed, "You shall hear no more from us to-night," exclaimed the foremost of the clamorous party: and such was the sympathy felt for the brave admiral by the lowest of his countrymen that, even amidst the confusion of such a night, he was not again disturbed by them.

At length, towards the end of November, after a night of sound and refreshing sleep, he was astonished on awaking to find his wounded arm free from pain. He sent for his surgeon to have it examined, when the silk came away at a touch. From that moment the wound began to heal. As soon as he considered his health sufficiently re-established, Sir Horatio, with that sincere gratitude to Providence for signal deliverances, which he never failed to profess, sent to the Rev Mr. Greville, minister of St. George's, Hanover Square, a paper with the following form of thanksgiving to be read at church in the time of divine service:—"An officer desires to return thanks to Almighty God for his perfect recovery from a severe wound; and also for the many mercies bestowed upon him. December 8th, 1797, for next Sunday." This paper, in Nelson's own hand-writing, framed and glazed, is still carefully preserved by the family of the clergyman to whom it was delivered.

On the 13th of December, having been pronounced fit for service by his surgeons, he made his appearance at court, and was received in the most gracious and tender manner by the king, who expressed his sorrow at the loss which he had sustained, and the

Nelson's Applications to the Navy Pay Office.

impaired state of his health, which he feared might deprive his country of his future services. "You have lost your right arm," observed the king.— "But not my right hand," replied Sir Horatio, "as I have the honour of presenting Captain Berry to you; and besides, may it please your majesty, I can never think that a loss which the performance of my duty has occasioned; and, so long as I have a foot to stand on, I will combat for my king and country." His majesty appeared deeply affected by this energetic answer; and, on the 19th of December, Nelson joined the procession which attended the king to St. Paul's, to render public thanksgiving to the Supreme Being for the recent successes of the British navy.

It was about this time that he went to the Navy Pay Office, accompanied by Mr. Bolton, to apply for the usual allowance of a year's pay, as smart money for the loss of the sight of his right eye; but payment was refused, because he was not provided with a certificate from a surgeon that the sight was actually destroyed. Vexed at the enforcement of what, in his case, might have been deemed a superfluous formality, as his loss was sufficiently notorious, he not only procured the desired certificate, but also obtained from his surgeons an attestation of the loss of his arm, saying that one might just as well be doubted as the other. On going afterwards to receive the sum, which was the annual pay of a captain only, that being his rank when he met with the accident, the clerk observed that he thought it had been more. "Oh no!" jocosely replied the hero, "this is only for an eye: in a few days I shall come for an arm; and in a little time longer, God knows, most probably for a leg." Accordingly, he soon afterwards went again to the Office, accompanied as before by his brother-in-law, and with perfect good humour exhibited the supererogatory certificate of the loss of his arm.

The Vanguard commissioned for his Flag.

Towards the end of 1797, Admiral Nelson received information from Lord St. Vincent, that he had written to Lord Spencer, and desired that the Foudroyant might be fitted for his flag as soon as she was launched. The commander-in-chief added that Nelson's faithful attendant, John Sykes, had been appointed gunner of the Andromache. Some delay having taken place in the completion of the Foudroyant, on the 19th of December, the Vanguard, 74, was commissioned for Nelson's flag. About this time, he left London for Bath, and there, while the Vanguard was equipping, he passed some weeks in the society of his father and the family of his younger sister, Mrs. Matcham.

Nelson rejoins the Earl of St. Vincent off Cadiz.

CHAPTER VII.

1798.

SIR HORATIO IS ORDERED TO HOIST HIS FLAG ON BOARD THE VANGUARD AND REJOIN LORD ST. VINCENT — HE IS SENT WITH A SQUADRON TO ASCERTAIN THE OBJECT OF THE FRENCH ARMAMENT AT TOULON — SUDDEN TEMPEST — NELSON IS JOINED BY A DETACHMENT FROM THE FLEET — SAILS UP THE MEDITERRANEAN IN PURSUIT OF THE FRENCH — TOUCHES AT NAPLES — PROCEEDS TO EGYPT — RETURNS TO SICILY — SAILS AGAIN FOR EGYPT — BATTLE OF ABOU-KIR — RECEPTION OF THE ADMIRAL AT NAPLES — HE IS CREATED A PEER — OTHER HONOURS CONFERRED ON HIM — HIS INTERPOSITION IN BEHALF OF THE CULLODEN AND HER CAPTAIN — PRESENTS SENT TO HIM BY THE GRAND SIGNOR AND OTHER FOREIGN STATES.

ON the 16th of March, 1798, the rear-admiral received orders to hoist his flag on board the Vanguard, and to take under his charge a convoy for Lisbon. He immediately made every preparation to join his ship. On this occasion a gloomy foreboding hung over the spirits of Lady Nelson, which Sir Horatio exerted himself to dispel. "My ambition," said he, "is satisfied. I am now going to raise you to that rank in which I have long wished to see you." After an ineffectual attempt to put to sea, he at length sailed from St. Helen's on the 9th of April, and on the 29th joined the Earl of St. Vincent, off Cadiz.

"I am very happy," wrote the first lord of the Admiralty to the commander-in-chief, on this occasion, "to send you Sir Horatio Nelson again, not only because I believe I cannot send you a more zealous, active, and approved officer, but because I have reason to believe that his being under your command will be agreeable to your wishes. If your lordship

French Armament at Toulon.

is as desirous to have him with you as he is to be with you, I am sure the arrangement must be perfectly satisfactory." "I do assure your lordship," replied the noble admiral, "that the arrival of Admiral Nelson has given me new life: you could not have gratified me more than in sending him. His presence in the Mediterranean is so very essential that I mean to put the *Orion* and *Alexander* under his command, with the addition of three or four frigates, and to send him away, the moment the *Vanguard* has delivered her water to the in-shore squadron, to endeavour to ascertain the real object of the preparations making by the French."

The preparations alluded to by Lord St. Vincent were making at Toulon for an expedition, the object of which was kept a profound secret. The armament destined for it consisted of thirteen sail of the line, seven 40-gun frigates, twenty-four smaller vessels of war, and nearly two hundred transports, filled with troops, horses, artillery, provisions, and military stores. Immediately on Nelson's arrival, the commander-in-chief sent him, as he intended, with orders to proceed up the Mediterranean, and to endeavour to ascertain, by every means in his power, either on the south coast of France or that of Genoa, the object of the expedition projected by the French. About a fortnight after his departure, the commander-in-chief was informed by the Admiralty that a reinforcement under Sir R. Curtis had been sent out to him, and he was directed on its arrival to despatch a squadron of twelve sail of the line and a sufficient number of frigates, under the command of "some discreet flag officer," into the Mediterranean, with instructions to proceed in quest of the French armament. In a private and confidential letter forwarded at the same time by Earl Spencer, government left it entirely to the decision of Lord St. Vincent either to

Nelson is detached to the Mediterranean.

make a detachment from his fleet, or to proceed with his whole force into the Mediterranean; the frustration of the object of the Toulon expedition being deemed preferable to the advantages attending the blockade of the Spanish fleet in Cadiz, which, however, was to be kept up, if possible. "If you determine," added Lord Spencer, "to send a detachment into the Mediterranean, I think it almost unnecessary to suggest to you the propriety of putting it under the command of Sir H. Nelson, whose acquaintance with that part of the world, as well as his activity and disposition, seem to qualify him in a peculiar manner for that service." Lord St. Vincent, as it has been shown, had already anticipated this suggestion, to the great dissatisfaction of some of the senior officers commanding under him, who even ventured to complain to the first lord of the Admiralty of the marked preference given by the commander-in-chief to a junior admiral of the same fleet. The country, however, had soon abundant reason to congratulate itself on the discrimination which led Lord St. Vincent and the head of the Admiralty to select Nelson for this important service. These instructions were accompanied by orders that any ports in the Mediterranean should be considered as hostile — those of the island of Sardinia alone excepted — of which the governors or chief magistrates should refuse to permit the commanders of any of his majesty's ships arriving therein to procure supplies of provisions, or of any articles which they might require.

The admiral lost no time in forwarding the purport of these instructions to Sir Horatio, who, before they reached him, was exposed, in the night of the 20th of May, being then in the Gulf of Lyons, to the fury of one of those sudden tempests to which the Mediterranean is liable. The Vanguard suffered

His Squadron dispersed by a Storm.

more from the effects of this storm than any of the other vessels. It carried away her topmasts, and, finally her foremast, besides which her bowsprit was sprung in three places. The line of battle ships were separated by the gale from their three frigates. In the morning, they succeeded in wearing the Vanguard with the remnant of the sprit-sail; and Captain Ball, in the Alexander, took her in tow, bearing up for Sardinia, while the Orion looked out ahead for a pilot to carry them into the road of San Pietro. Nelson, fearful lest the safety of the Alexander might be endangered by her attempt to assist the Vanguard, sent orders to Captain Ball to cast off, but that brave officer replied that 'he knew he could save the Vanguard, and, by God's help, he would do it.*' On the 24th they reached San Pietro in safety.

On the same day, writing to Lady Nelson, he thus described the effect produced on his mind by the dangers which he had just escaped:—"I ought not to call what has happened to the Vanguard by the cold name of accident. I believe firmly it was the Almighty goodness, to check my consummate vanity; I hope it has made me a better officer,

* The commencement of the acquaintance of Nelson and Captain Ball was in 1783, when both resided for a short time at St. Omer's, in France. They parted mutually prejudiced against each other, and did not again meet till Ball was sent with the squadron which reinforced Nelson shortly before the tempest. At their first interview, Nelson, under the impression of old feelings, asked, "What do you expect by going with me? Do you wish to get your bones broke?" "It was not to save my bones that I came into the service," replied Ball; "I know you are going on a perilous duty, and am therefore happy to go with you." The perseverance and resources displayed by the captain, as related above, won the heart of Sir Horatio, than whom none could better appreciate extraordinary merit; and from that hour the closest intimacy and warmest mutual regard prevailed between these officers.

Consequences of the Tempest.

as I feel it has made me a better man. I kiss with all humility the rod. Figure to yourself, on Sunday evening at sunset, a vain man walking in his cabin, with a squadron around him, who looked up to their chief to lead them to glory, and in whom their chief placed the firmest reliance, that the proudest ships, of equal numbers, belonging to France, would have lowered their flags, and with a very rich prize lying by him. Figure to yourself, on Monday morning when the sun rose, this proud conceited man, his ship dismasted, his fleet dispersed, and himself in such distress that the meanest frigate out of France would have been an unwelcome guest. But it has pleased Almighty God to bring us into a safe port, where, although we are refused the rights of humanity, yet the Vanguard will in two days get to sea again as an English man-of-war."

When he wrote this letter, Nelson was not aware how good reason he had to deny "the cold name of accident" to the disaster which had befallen the Vanguard. It not only afforded him occasion to lay in a supply of water and to effect a junction with the reinforcement sent to him by the commander-in-chief under Captain Troubridge, but it also preserved the squadron in a most extraordinary manner from the powerful French armament, which sailed with general Bonaparte from Toulon on the very day of the tempest, and which, in the thick weather that ensued, must have passed the British ships at not many leagues distance.

The rear-admiral was not only unable to obtain the assistance he had expected from the governor of San Pietro, as a neutral port, but the latter had even received orders from the French not to admit any British ship into the harbour. He could not, however, prevent the squadron from anchoring in the road; and the resources which British seamen always find

Nelson proceeds off Toulon.

within themselves soon supplied every deficiency. By the active exertions of Captain Berry, and the assistance of Captains Ball and Saumarez, the Vanguard was equipped with a jury foremast and topmast, and on the fourth day after their arrival the squadron again put to sea.

Eager to execute the orders he had received, the rear-admiral neither lost any time in sailing to some friendly port, where he might have refitted his disabled ship, nor did he express any intention of shifting his flag, which the peculiar circumstances of the Vanguard might have seemed to render desirable; but immediately steered for the appointed rendezvous off Toulon. There he arrived on the 4th of June, and the following day was joined by La Mutine, Captain Hardy, who brought the acceptable intelligence, that Captain Troubridge had been detached from the fleet with ten sail of the line and a fifty-gun ship, to reinforce the rear-admiral. This intelligence diffused universal joy throughout the little squadron; and Sir Horatio observed with exultation to Captain Berry, that he should then be a match for any hostile fleet in the Mediterranean, which it would be his only desire to encounter.

On the 6th the squadron was spread, anxiously looking out for the expected reinforcement, which was now the sole object of the rear-admiral's attention and solicitude. He had received certain intelligence of the departure of the French from Toulon; and so entirely was his mind engrossed with the desire of joining the promised reinforcement in order to pursue the enemy, that, though he was informed, by a vessel he spoke with, that several sail then in sight were Spanish ships richly laden, he refused to deviate from his course. Prize-money was not his object; all selfish considerations were absorbed in his great mind by his zeal for the honour and the interest of

The Squadron is reinforced.

his country. On the 8th, at noon, ten sail were discovered from the mast head; they were soon found to be British ships of war, and at sun-set the junction so ardently desired by the admiral was effected.

This reinforcement, which had been selected from among the very best ships in the fleet under Lord St. Vincent, consisted entirely of 74-gun ships, namely: the Culloden, Captain Troubridge; Goliath, Captain Foley; Minotaur, Captain Louis; Defence, Captain Peyton; Bellerophon, Captain Darby; Majestic, Captain Westcott; Swiftsure, Captain Hallowell; Theusus, Captain Miller; and Audacious, Captain Gould; and to this force was afterwards added the Leander, 50, Captain Thompson.

Sir Horatio had received no instructions what course he was now to steer, nor had he any certain intelligence relative to the destination of the hostile armament. He was therefore left entirely to his own judgment; and, knowing that the enemy had sailed with a north-west wind, he was naturally led to conclude that they were bound up the Mediterranean. He immediately despatched *La Mutine* to *Civita Vecchia*, and along the Roman coast, to obtain intelligence, while he himself steered with the fleet for *Corsica*, which island he reached on the 12th of June. Unable to learn any thing there, the admiral on the following day continued his course to the Roman coast, where he was rejoined by *La Mutine*. Captain Hardy had been equally unsuccessful, and Sir Horatio now resolved to steer towards *Naples*, in the hope of gaining some information.

The admiral had soon the satisfaction to find that the captains of his squadron had no need of particular instructions to keep in constant readiness for battle. The ardour of their zeal anticipated his utmost wishes. The decks of all the ships were perfectly

Nelson sails in quest of the French Fleet.

clear both night and day ; and every man was ready to take his post at a moment's notice. He was delighted to see them daily exercising their men at the great guns, as well as with small arms ; and making every possible preparation for immediate action.

On the 16th the fleet came in sight of Mount Vesuvius, and Captain Troubridge was despatched in *La Mutine* to obtain what intelligence he could from Sir William Hamilton. Writing to Sir William, the admiral says : " If their fleet is not moored in as strong a port as Toulon, nothing shall hinder me from attacking them, and, with the blessing of Almighty God, I hope for a most glorious victory." To Lord Spencer he wrote about the same time, communicating his opinion that the enemy were bound to Egypt, in prosecution of a plan concerted with Tippoo Saib, for attacking our possessions in India. " But," added he, " be they bound to the antipodes, your lordship may rely that I will not lose a moment in bringing them to action, and endeavouring to destroy their transports. I have sent Captain Troubridge on shore to talk to General Acton, and hope the king of Naples will send me some frigates ; for mine parted company on the 20th of May, and have not joined me since." To Sir William Hamilton he again writes : " If I meet the enemy at sea, the convoy will get off for want of frigates ;" and to Earl St. Vincent he addressed this laconic epistle : " I have only to assure you I will bring the French fleet to action the moment I can lay hands on them. Till then, adieu."

Captain Troubridge returned on board with information that the French were at Malta on the 8th of June, and preparing to attack that fortress. He was desired to intimate to the admiral that Naples, being at peace with the French republic, could not afford any assistance whatever : but he had succeeded,

He sails to Egypt.

through the influence of Lady Hamilton, in obtaining a secret order for the supply of such necessaries as the British squadron might stand in need of.

Lamenting that even a day had been lost by visiting Naples, the admiral pushed by the shortest cut through the Faro di Messina, which the fleet passed on the 20th. The joy with which the arrival of Sir Horatio was hailed by the Sicilians gave sincere satisfaction to every one on board the squadron. Here the admiral received information from the British consul that Malta had actually surrendered to the French, and he instantly formed a plan for attacking their fleet in the harbour of Gozo, where it was reported to be then at anchor.

The squadron immediately bore away for Malta with a press of sail; but at day-light on the 22^d of June, being off Cape Passaro, La Mutine spoke with a Genoese brig from that island, which gave intelligence that it surrendered on the 15th, and that the French had sailed on the 16th, with a fresh gale at north-west. The admiral was not long in determining what course to take; the signal to bear up, and to steer to the south-east with all possible sail, was instantly made. He now concluded that Egypt was the object of the enemy's destination, and to Egypt he accordingly proceeded. On the way the fleet spoke with only three vessels, two of which had come from Alexandria, and the other from the Archipelago, without having seen any thing of the French. On the 29th of June the Pharos of Alexandria was discovered; and, nearing the land with a press of sail, the admiral perceived, to his great surprise and disappointment, that there was not a single French ship in either of the harbours. The governor of Alexandria was as much astonished at the sight of the British squadron as he was at the information that a French fleet was probably on its passage for that place.

Nelson's Vindication of his Conduct.

Captain Hardy was directed to run close in with *La Mutine*, and to send an officer on shore to Mr. Baldwin, the British consul at Alexandria, soliciting information; but he brought back word that Mr. Baldwin had left Alexandria nearly three months before. There were in the old port one Turkish ship of the line, four frigates, and about twelve other vessels; and in the Franks port, about fifty sail belonging to different nations. What the brave admiral felt at this disappointment, it is impossible to express. Certain it is that the extreme anxiety which he suffered in consequence brought on such violent spasms in the region of the heart, as continued occasionally to afflict him during the rest of his life.

In a letter addressed to his commander-in-chief, as soon as he had ascertained that the French were not at Alexandria, after relating the particulars of his baffled pursuit, he thus vindicates the line of conduct which he had adopted: "To do nothing was, I felt, disgraceful; therefore I made use of my understanding: and by it I ought to stand or fall. I am before your lordship's judgment, which, in the present case, I feel, is the tribunal of my country — and if, under all circumstances, it is decided I am wrong, I ought, for the sake of our country, to be superseded: for, at this moment, when I know the French are not in Alexandria, I hold the same opinion as off Cape Passaro, viz. that, under all circumstances, I was right in steering for Alexandria; and by that opinion I must stand or fall. However erroneous my judgment may be, I feel conscious of my honest intentions; which, I hope, will bear me up under the greatest misfortune that could happen to me as an officer — that of your lordship's thinking me wrong."

Disappointed, but not discouraged, the admiral now deeply and anxiously deliberated what could

He returns to Sicily.

possibly have been the course of the French fleet, or their ultimate destination. His restless and active mind would not permit him to remain a moment on the same spot; he, therefore, shaped his course northward, for the coast of Caramania, to reach as quickly as possible some place where information might be obtained, and likewise to take in a supply of water, of which the ships began to run short. On the 4th of July the fleet made the coast of Caramania; and, steering along the south side of the island of Candia, under a press of sail both night and day, with a contrary wind, on the 18th they came again in sight of the island of Sicily. The admiral resolved to enter the port of Syracuse, with which not a person in the fleet was acquainted. Every ship, however, arrived safely in the harbour, through the skill and judgment of the officers; and immediately began to take in water, wine, lemons, and bullocks, with all possible expedition. This was the first opportunity that the Vanguard had enjoyed of receiving water on board from the 6th of May; so that not only the stock of that ship, but of several others of the squadron, was nearly exhausted. Every precaution having been taken, through the exertions of our ambassador at Naples, and the influence of Lady Hamilton, that no possibility of delay might be occasioned by the secret machinations or threats of the French, the supplies of the squadron, owing to the promptitude and uncommon exertions of every individual in the fleet, were completed in five days. While at Syracuse, the admiral received vague accounts that the enemy had not been seen either in the Archipelago or the Adriatic, and he was likewise assured that they had not gone down the Mediterranean. This confirmed him in his former opinion, that Egypt was the object of their destination. Though the pursuit was still uncertain, yet neither former disappointment, nor the

His Disappointment.

hardships and fatigues already endured, could deter him from steering to the quarter where there was a chance of finding the enemy.

On his arrival at Syracuse, the admiral had written to Sir William Hamilton. "It is an old saying, the devil's children have the devil's luck. I cannot find, or to this moment learn, beyond vague conjecture, where the French fleet are gone to. All my ill fortune hitherto has proceeded from want of frigates. Off Cape Passaro, on the 22^d of June, I saw two frigates, which were supposed to be French; and it has been said since that a line-of-battle ship was to leeward of them, with the riches of Malta on board; but it was the destruction of the enemy, and not riches for myself, that I was seeking. These would have fallen to me if I had had frigates; but, except the ship of the line, I regard not all the riches in this world. Having gone a round of six hundred leagues at this season of the year, with an expedition incredible, here I am, as ignorant of the situation of the enemy as I was twenty-seven days ago." Again he writes on the following day: "I have no frigate, nor a sign of one. The masts, yards, &c. for the Vanguard will, I hope, be prepared directly: for, should the French be so strongly secured in port that I cannot get at them, I shall immediately shift my flag into some other ship, and send the Vanguard to Naples to be refitted; for hardly any person but myself would have continued on service so long in such a wretched state." Writing to Lady Nelson from the same place, he says: "I have not been able to find the French fleet, to my great mortification, or the event I can scarcely doubt. . . . However, no person will say that it has been for want of activity. I yet live in hopes of meeting these fellows; but it would have been my delight to have tried Bonaparte on a wind, for he commands the fleet as

He sails again for Alexandria.

well as the army. Glory is my object, and that alone."

On the 25th of July the squadron left Syracuse. Irritated beyond measure that the French should have so long baffled his vigilance, the admiral could with difficulty endure the tediousness of the night; and frequently the officer of the watch had scarcely left his cabin, when he was again summoned to declare the hour, and to counteract the persuasion of the commander that it was not yet day-break. Sir Horatio had still received no positive information concerning the enemy, but it occurred to him that some authentic intelligence might be obtained in the Morea. He steered for that coast; and, on the 28th, being off the gulph of Coron, Captain Troubridge was despatched to that place in the Culloden. In less than three hours he returned with an account from the governor of Coron, that the enemy had been seen about four weeks before, proceeding in a south-east direction from Candia. Upon this information, the admiral resolved once more to visit Alexandria.

At noon, on the 1st of August, the squadron came in sight of the harbour of that city, which was soon discovered to be full of vessels, and the French flag was perceived flying on board some of the ships. Every bosom expanded with joy at the sight of the enemy, and none received from it more heartfelt satisfaction than the admiral himself. It appears, at first sight, not a little extraordinary that the French fleet should have been missed by the gallant admiral both on his first passage to Egypt and his return to Syracuse; but this circumstance is very clearly accounted for in the following manner: The French steered for Candia, and consequently made an angular passage to Alexandria; the English fleet, on the contrary, steered directly for that place. The smallness of the latter made it necessary to sail in close

Plan for Attacking the Enemy.

order, and therefore the space which it covered was very limited. Besides, the admiral had no frigates that he could detach upon the look-out, and the constant haze of the atmosphere in that climate still farther diminished the chance of descrying the enemy. The distance between Candia and the coast of Barbary, being about thirty-five leagues, affords sufficient space for two large fleets to pass without mutual observation, especially under the circumstances already stated.—As the British fleet steered up to the northward on its return, while that of the enemy took a southern course, it is obvious that their chance of meeting was still less than before.

On the valour and conduct of every captain in the squadron, Sir Horatio justly placed the firmest reliance. During the whole of his cruize, it had been his practice, whenever circumstances would permit, to assemble the captains on board the Vanguard, and there fully to explain to them his own ideas of the different and best modes of attack, together with such plans as he purposed to execute on falling in with the enemy, whatever might be their situation, by night or by day. There was no possible position in which they could be found that he had not taken into his calculation, and for the most advantageous attack of which he had not digested and arranged the best possible disposition of his force. Each of the captains of his squadron was, therefore, thoroughly acquainted with the masterly ideas of their admiral, on the subject of naval tactics; and, upon surveying the situation of the enemy, these officers could ascertain with precision what were the ideas and intentions of their commander, without the aid of any farther instructions. By these means signals were rendered almost unnecessary, much time was saved, and the almost undivided attention of every captain could be paid to the conduct of his particular

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ship — a circumstance of prodigious advantage to the general service

The destination of the French armament was involved in doubt and uncertainty. The admiral, however, was forcibly struck by the consideration that, as it was commanded by the man whom the French had dignified with the title of the Conqueror of Italy, and as it had on board a very large body of troops, it was destined for some attempt which the land force might execute without the aid of the fleet. It therefore became a material consideration with him, in case he had fallen in with the hostile armament at sea, to prevent the transports from escaping, and reaching in safety the place of rendezvous. He formed a plan, so to arrange his force as to engage the whole attention of the enemy's ships of war, and at the same time to destroy as many as possible of the convoy. Conformably to this plan, he had resolved to divide his force into three squadrons,* in the following manner :

VANGUARD,	ORION,	CULLODEN,
MINOTAUR,	GOLIATH,	THEBEUS,
LEANDER,	MAJESTIC,	ALEXANDER,
AUDACIOUS,	BELLEROPHON.	SWIFTSURE.
DEFENCE,		
ZEALOUS.		

Of these squadrons, two were to attack the ships of war, while the third was to pursue the transports, and to sink and destroy as many of them as it could. How well this plan was arranged for annoying the enemy, must be obvious to every capacity ; and no doubt can be entertained that, had circumstances occasioned it to be put into execution, the success would have been as complete and as signal as that which awaited his projected mode of attack at anchor. How

* The whole of Nelson's squadron were 74's, except the *Leander*, 60.

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deservedly the hero was entitled to all the glory he acquired by his success, must be apparent, when it is considered that accident had no share in the victory; but that all his plans were matured two months before an opportunity presented of executing any of them, and that they were already familiar to the understanding of every captain in his fleet.

The Pharos of Alexandria was discovered by the fleet at noon, on the first of August. The preceding evening the *Alexander* and *Swiftsure* had been detached ahead to reconnoitre the ports of Alexandria, while the rest of the squadron remained in the offing. The enemy's fleet was first discovered by the *Zealous*, Captain Hood, who communicated, by signal, the number of their ships, sixteen, lying at anchor in line of battle, in a bay which was afterwards found to be that of Aboukir. The admiral instantly hauled his wind, a movement that was observed and immediately followed by the whole squadron, and at the same time he recalled the *Alexander* and *Swiftsure*.

At a quarter past three P.M. the admiral made the signal to prepare for battle; and at four, he directed the ships of his squadron to prepare to anchor with springs on their cables, and signified his intention to engage the van and centre of the enemy. His idea in this disposition of his force was, first to secure the victory, and then to make the most of it, according to circumstances. The squadron stood in for the enemy's fleet, in close line of battle; and, as all the officers were totally unacquainted with the bay, each ship kept sounding as she advanced.

Notwithstanding this precaution, Captain Troubridge, in his eager desire to gain a forward station in the contest, unfortunately ran aground on a reef of hidden rocks, that extends a considerable distance from the island of Bequieres, forming the north-west point of the bay of Aboukir. This unfortunate

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circumstance was severely felt at the moment by the admiral and all the officers of the squadron; but nothing could equal the anxiety and the anguish of mind experienced by the captain himself, during so many eventful hours. But one consolation presented itself to him in the midst of the distresses of his situation, a feeble one it is true, that his ship served as a beacon to several others advancing close in his rear, and which might otherwise have experienced a similar misfortune.

Never was more heroism displayed than in the prompt decision of the British admiral. When his squadron was well collected round him, he determined, without loss of time, to attack the foe, formidable as was their appearance; superior in number, weight of metal, and size; night coming on, and in an unknown navigation. His honour, his character, and his life, were staked on the decision of the enterprise, for it was well known that conquest or death was his determined object.

His resolution was instantly formed, and his intentions made known to the fleet, by the signal of the headmost ship to bear down and engage, as she reached the van of the enemy; the next ship to pass on and engage the second ship of the line, and so on. With alacrity was this signal obeyed: the sure promise of victory gladdened the heart of every Briton, and a general ardour pervaded all ranks. The moment Captain Berry, who commanded the Vanguard under the admiral, on surveying the position of the French fleet at anchor, fully comprehended his plan of attack, he exclaimed in extacy, "If we succeed, what will the world say?" "*If!*" replied Nelson; "there is no if in the case: that we shall succeed is certain; who may live to tell the story is a very different question." The commanders, with that courage which distinguishes men inured to danger,

Position of the French Fleet.

saw the hazard of the contest and prepared to meet it. Their ships were trained to every exercise of arms: all means of preservation from fire, leaks, and other casualties, were arranged in order; a bower cable was got out of the after part of each ship, and bent forward, that she might anchor by the stern: the guns were ready primed and double shotted; the men at their quarters waiting in silent expectation, for the orders of their superiors: the officers looking respectfully towards their captains, and awaiting with firmness the awful moment. The enemy's line presented a most formidable appearance: it consisted of one ship of 120 guns, three of 80, and nine of 74, and was anchored in a compact order, close in with the shore, describing an obtuse angle in its form, flanked with gun-boats, mortar-vessels, and four large frigates, and with a battery of guns and mortars on the island of Bequieres, near which it was necessary to pass. This situation gave the enemy the most decided advantage, as they had nothing to attend to but their artillery, their superior skill in the use of which has so often secured them splendid victories on shore. In short, each ship, being at anchor, became a fixed battery. So far, however, was the French commander-in-chief from considering himself safe in this position, that he had endeavoured to find a channel by which, at least, the seventy-fours of his squadron might get into the port of Alexandria; but though by orders from Bonaparte he had offered a reward of 10,000 livres to any pilot of the country who would undertake to carry the squadron in, none of them would venture to take charge of a vessel drawing more than twenty feet water. At the same time, with the usual vanity of his nation, he gave it as his opinion that the English commander, finding his own force to be inferior to that of the French, had been afraid to pursue and attack him.

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The position of the French presented the most formidable obstacles, but these the admiral viewed with the eye of a seaman determined on attack. It instantly struck his comprehensive and penetrating mind that, where there was room for an enemy's ship to swing, there must be room for one of his to anchor. No farther signals than those already made were necessary, the admiral's designs being fully known to the whole squadron.

Captain T. Foley, who, in the Goliath, had kept close to the admiral on his lee bow, enjoyed the proud distinction of leading inside. This post of honour was for a few minutes disputed with him by the Zealous, Captain Hood; but, by setting his top-gallant studding sails for a short time, Foley preserved his envied situation. It had long been a favourite idea with him, and he had mentioned it on the preceding evening to Captains Troubridge and Hood, that considerable advantage would arise, if the enemy should be found moored in line of battle in with the land, to lead between them and the shore, as their guns on that side were not likely to be manned or ready for action. The batteries on the island of Bequieres were too distant to annoy the assailants: but, as our squadron advanced, a steady fire was opened from the starboard side of the whole French line full into the bows of our van ships. The silent approach of the British was observed by the enemy with astonishment. On board each ship the crew were employed aloft in furling sails and below in tending the braces, and in hauling a range of cable on deck, preparatory to anchoring by the stern. At half-past six the French hoisted their colours.

Captain Foley had intended to fix himself on the inner bow of the Guerrier: he kept the Goliath therefore as near the edge of the bank as the depth of water would permit; but his anchor hung in the stopper;

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and, having opened a tremendous fire, he drifted to the second ship before his anchor was clear. Then, bearing up, he shortened sail, anchored by the stern inside of the *Conquerant*, the second ship in the enemy's line, and in ten minutes brought down her masts. Captain Hood, in the *Zealous*, took the station which Foley had intended to occupy, and anchored by the stern on the larboard bow of the *Guerrier*, which he totally disabled in twelve minutes. The third ship that doubled the enemy's van was the *Orion*, Sir James Saumarez, which passed to windward of the *Zealous*, and opened her larboard guns as long as they bore on the *Guerrier*. Then, passing inside of the *Goliath*, and, being annoyed by a frigate, *Le Serieux*, the *Orion* yawed as much as enabled her to sink this opponent with a tremendous fire; when Sir James hauled round towards the French line, and, anchoring inside, between the fifth and sixth ship from the *Guerrier*, took his station, with that gallantry which he had already often displayed, on the larboard bow of the *Franklin* and the quarter of the *Peuple Souverain*, receiving and returning the fire of both. The sun was verging to the horizon, when the *Audacious*, Captain Gould, having poured a heavy fire into the *Guerrier* and the *Conquerant*, as she passed between them, fixed herself on the larboard bow of the latter, and afterwards engaged the *Peuple Souverain*.

Captain Miller, in the *Theseus*, was the last that anchored between the French line and the shore. Passing between the *Guerrier* and the *Zealous*, he could not resist the opportunity which offered, as he brushed the Frenchman's sides, of pouring in an effective broadside: he then took his station on the larboard side of the *Spartiate*.

The *Vanguard*, distinguished by the flag of Admiral Nelson, now entered the battle. As rear-

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admiral of the blue, he carried the blue flag at the mizen, but, from a standing order of the commander-in-chief, the squadron wore the white, or St. George's ensign, in the action. Lest his colours should be carried away by any random shots, he had six ensigns, or flags, red, white, and blue, flying in different parts of his rigging. Aware of the impossibility of the rear of the enemy, which was to leeward, coming to the assistance of the van, he determined to redouble his efforts to conquer one part before he attacked the other. In pursuance of that resolution, he himself set the example to the rest of his fleet, and anchored on the other side of the enemy's line, who, in consequence, were completely between two fires. The Vanguard, having anchored within half pistol-shot on the larboard side of the Spartiate, covered the approach of the ships in the rear, and opened a most animated fire on her opponent. In a few minutes every man stationed at the first six guns in the fore-part of the Vanguard's deck were all either killed or wounded, and one gun in particular was repeatedly cleared. The admiral, however, kept up such a severe and well-directed fire, that the Spartiate, being totally dismasted, and having lost a great number of her crew, was obliged to call for quarter.

When the Vanguard anchored alongside of the Spartiate, she became exposed, at the same time, to the raking fire of L'Aquilon, the next ship in the enemy's line. Owing, however, to the gallant and judicious manner in which Captain Louis took his station ahead of the Vanguard, the Minotaur not only effectually relieved her from this distressing situation, but obliged her opponent to strike to her superior prowess.

The Bellerophon, commanded by Captain Darby, now entered the conflict, and, running down the line, brought up on the starboard bow of the enor-

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mous L'Orient, of 120 guns, bearing the flag of the French commander-in-chief, Admiral Brueys. Captain Peyton followed close in the Defence, and, with great judgment, took his station ahead of the Minotaur, by which the line remained unbroken: he engaged, on the larboard bow, the Franklin, of 80 guns, which ship carried the flag of rear-admiral Blanquet, the second in command. The Majestic, commanded by Captain Westcott, next came into action, and closely engaged the Heureux on the starboard bow, receiving also the fire of the Tonnant, of 80 guns, astern of L'Orient. The superior weight of metal pouring in from those two ships, soon made dreadful havoc in the Majestic. Captain Westcott fell by a musket-shot, while exerting himself with the utmost gallantry to counteract, by the energy and vivacity of his fire, the advantages which the enemy possessed in size and number. Mr. Cuthbert, the first lieutenant, continued the unequal conflict with determined courage and resolution.

The Alexander and Swiftsure now came in for their share of glory. Having been prevented from assisting at the commencement of the battle, by bearing down to reconnoitre Alexandria, and afterwards being obliged to alter their course, to avoid the shoal that had proved so fatal to the Culloden, it was eight o'clock before they came into action. For some time the combatants had been enveloped in total darkness, which was only dispelled by the frequent flashes from their guns: and the volumes of smoke now rolling down the line, from the fierce fire of those engaged to windward, rendered it extremely difficult for such of the British ships as came last to take their station to distinguish friend from foe. To remedy this evil, Admiral Nelson directed his fleet to hoist four lights horizontally at the mizen-peak, as soon as it was dark.

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The Swiftsure was bearing down under a press of sail, and had got within range of the enemy's guns, when Captain Hallowell perceived a ship standing out of action, under her foresail and foretop-sail, having no lights displayed. Supposing her to be an enemy, he was at first inclined to fire into her; but, as this would have broken the plan which he had laid down for his conduct, namely, not to suffer a shot to be fired till the sails were all clued up and the ship had anchored in her station, he desisted. Fortunate it was that he did so: for the ship in question was afterwards found to be the Bellerophon, which had sustained such damage from the overwhelming fire of the French admiral's enormous ship, L'Orient, that Captain Darby found it necessary to fall out of action, being himself wounded, having two lieutenants killed, and nearly two hundred men killed and wounded. His remaining mast falling soon afterwards, and killing in its fall several officers and men, among the rest another of his lieutenants, he was never able to regain his station.

About eight o'clock, the Swiftsure anchored in the place which had been before occupied by the Bellerophon, and immediately began a steady and well-directed fire on the quarter of the Franklin and the bows of L'Orient. At the same instant, the Alexander passed under the stern of the French admiral, and anchored within-side, on his larboard-quarter, raking him, and keeping up a severe fire of musketry on his decks.

The last ship which entered this bloody conflict was the Leander. Captain Thompson bore up to the Culloden, on seeing her ground, that he might afford any assistance in his power to get her off from her unfortunate situation, but, finding that nothing could be done, and unwilling that his services should be lost where they could be more effective, he made

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sail for the scene of action. With a degree of judgment highly honourable to his professional character, he advanced towards the enemy's line on the outside, and dropped his anchor athwart-hawse of the Franklin, raking her with great success; all the shot from the Leander's broadside which passed that vessel striking the ship of the French commander-in-chief.

In the van, four of the French ships had already struck their colours to the British flag. The battle now raged chiefly in the centre. The Franklin; L'Orient, Tonnant, and Heureux, were in hot action, making every exertion to recover the glory that had been lost by their comrades. Meanwhile, the British admiral himself received a dangerous wound. It was supposed to have proceeded from langridge-shot, or a piece of iron: the skin of his forehead, being cut with it at right angles, hung down over his face in such a manner as to blind his sound eye. Captain Berry, who happened to stand near him, caught the admiral in his arms. It was the first idea of Sir Horatio and of every other person, that he was shot through the head. On being carried into the cockpit, where several of his gallant crew were stretched with their shattered and mangled limbs, the surgeon, with great anxiety, immediately came to the admiral. "No," replied the hero; "I will take my turn with my brave fellows." The agony of the wound increasing, he became convinced that the idea he had long indulged of dying in battle was now about to be accomplished. He immediately sent for his chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Comyn, begged of him to remember him to Lady Nelson, and signed a commission, appointing his friend, the brave Hardy, post-captain in the Vanguard, as the duty of carrying the despatches to the commander-in-chief would devolve on Captain Berry. He felt so grateful to Captain Louis, for having so nobly supported him in

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the commencement of the action, that, about nine o'clock, he directed his first lieutenant, Mr. Capel, to go on board the *Minotaur*, in the jolly boat, and desire that Captain Louis would come to him, for he could not enjoy a moment's peace, till he had thanked him for his conduct: adding, "this is the hundred and twenty-fourth time I have been engaged, but I believe it is now nearly over with me." Captain Louis immediately hastened on board the *Vanguard*, and the meeting which took place between the admiral and him was affecting in the extreme. The latter hung over his bleeding friend in silent sorrow. "Farewell, dear Louis," said the magnanimous Nelson; "I shall never forget the obligation I am under to you for your brave and generous conduct; and now, whatever may become of me, my mind is at peace." With the composure of the hero and the christian, he then resigned himself to death. Providence, however, willed otherwise. When the surgeon came to examine the wound, it evidently appeared that it was not mortal; the joyful intelligence was quickly circulated throughout the ship, and filled every bosom with new animation.

About half past eight, the *Aquilon* and the *Peuple Souverain* were taken possession of by the English, and Captain Berry sent a lieutenant and a party of marines for the same purpose to the *Spartiate*, which had struck to the *Vanguard*. The officer returned by the boat the French captain's sword, which Captain Berry immediately delivered to the admiral, who was then below in consequence of his wound. At this time the victory appeared decisive in favour of the British arms, for, though *L'Heureux* and *Tonnant* were not taken possession of, they were considered as completely subdued, which pleasing intelligence Captain Berry had likewise the satisfaction of communicating in person to the admiral.

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A few minutes after nine, a fire was observed to have broken out in the cabin of *L'Orient*; to that point Captain Hallowell ordered as many guns as could be spared from firing on the *Franklin* to be directed. He likewise desired Captain Allen, of the marines, to throw in the whole fire of his musquetry on the enemy's quarter, while the *Alexander* on the other side was keeping up an incessant shower of shot to the same point. Nelson himself insisted that *L'Orient* had struck her colours, and did not fire a single shot before, "unfortunately for us," said he, "she took fire." According to the report of the adjutant-general of the French fleet, who was saved out of her, she had on board nearly £600,000 sterling in money; and though he did not admit that she had struck, he acknowledged that all farther resistance on her part was vain. The conflagration soon began to rage with dreadful fury: still the French admiral sustained the honour of his flag with heroic firmness; but at length a period was put to his exertions by a cannon ball, which nearly cut him asunder. Still he desired not to be carried below, but to be left to die on deck, where he survived only a quarter of an hour. He had before received three desperate wounds, one on the head and two in his body, but could not be prevailed upon to quit his station on the arm-chest. Several of the officers and men, seeing the impracticability of extinguishing the fire, which had now extended itself along the upper decks, and was flaming up the masts, jumped overboard; some supporting themselves on spars and pieces of wreck, others swimming with all their might to escape the dreadful catastrophe. Shot flying in all directions dashed many of them to pieces; others were picked up by the boats of the fleet, or dragged into the lower ports of the nearest ships. Her captain, Casabianca, and his son, only ten years old, who, during the action,

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had exhibited proofs of bravery and intelligence far above his age, were less fortunate: they were seen for a time in the water on the wreck of L'Orient's mast, not being able to swim, seeking each other, till the ship blew up and put an end to their hopes and fears. The British sailors were meanwhile actively engaged in saving a fallen enemy, though the battle at that moment raged with uncontrolled fury. The Swiftsure anchored within half pistol shot of the larboard bow of L'Orient, and saved the lives of the commissary, first lieutenant, and ten men, drawn out of the water through the lower deck ports during the hottest part of the action. The situation of the Alexander and Swiftsure became perilous in the extreme. The expected explosion of such a ship as L'Orient was to be dreaded as involving all around in certain destruction. Captain Hallowell, however, determined not to move from his devoted station, though repeatedly urged to do so. He perceived the advantage he possessed in being to windward of the burning ship. Captain Ball was not so fortunate; twice he had the mortification to perceive that the fire of the enemy had communicated to the Alexander. He was, therefore, under the necessity of changing his birth and moving to a greater distance.

The admiral was informed by Captain Berry of the situation of the enemy. Forgetting his own sufferings, he hastened on deck; the first consideration that struck his feeling mind was the danger that threatened such a number of his fellow creatures. He ordered Captain Berry to make every exertion in his power to save as many of them as possible. A boat, the only one that could swim, was despatched from the Vanguard; the other ships immediately followed the example, and above seventy drowning wretches were preserved by those so lately employed in their destruction.

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The van of the English fleet having, for the present, finished their part in the glorious contest, enjoyed a sublime view of the two lines illumined by the fire of the ill-fated foe. The colours of the contending vessels were plainly distinguished. The moon, which had by this time risen, opposing her cold light to the warm glow of the fire beneath, added to the grandeur and the solemnity of the scene. The flames had now made such progress that an explosion was instantly expected; yet the enemy, on the lower deck, either insensible of the danger that threatened them, or impelled by the last paroxysms of despair and vengeance, continued to fire. At thirty-seven minutes past nine, the fatal explosion took place. The fire communicated to the magazine, and L'Orient blew up with a crashing sound that deafened all around her. The tremulous motion, felt to the very bottom of each ship, was like that of an earthquake. An awful pause and death-like silence of about three minutes ensued, before the fragments, driven to a vast height into the air, could descend; and then the greatest apprehensions were felt, from the volumes of burning matter which threatened to fall on the decks and rigging of the surrounding ships. Fortunately, however, no material damage occurred. A port-fire fell into the main-royal of the Alexander, and she was once more in danger of sharing the fate of the enemy; but, by the exertions of Captain Ball, the flames were soon extinguished. Two large pieces of the wreck likewise dropped into the main and foretops of the Swiftsure, from which the men had been fortunately withdrawn.

An awful silence now reigned for several minutes, as if the contending squadrons, struck with horror at the dreadful event which in an instant had hurled so many brave men into the air, had forgotten their hostile rage in pity to the sufferers. But short was

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the pause of death: vengeance soon roused the drooping spirits of the enemy. The Franklin, which now bore the French commander's flag, opened her fire with redoubled fury on the Defence and Swiftsure, and made the signal for renewed hostilities. The Swiftsure, being disengaged from her late formidable adversary, had leisure to direct her whole fire into the quarter of the foe that had thus presumed to break the solemn silence; and in a very short time, by the well directed and steady fire of these two ships, and of the Leander on her bows, the Franklin was compelled to strike.

The Alexander, the Majestic, and occasionally the Swiftsure, were now the only British ships engaged; but the commander of the latter, finding that he could not direct his guns clear of the Alexander, which had dropped between him and the Tonnant, and fearful lest he should fire into a friend, desisted, although he was severely annoyed by the shot of the Tonnant, which was falling thick about him. Most of the English ships were so cut up in their masts and rigging, that they were unable to set any sail or to move from their stations. The firing ceased entirely about three in the morning of the 2^d of August; but at four, just as the day began to dawn, the Alexander and Majestic recommenced the action with the Tonnant, Guillaume Tell, Genereux, and Timoleon. The Heureux and Mercure had fallen out of the line, and anchored a considerable distance to leeward.

Captain Miller, perceiving the unequal contest, bore down to assist his friends, and began a furious cannonade on the enemy. The Theseus had as yet fortunately received but little damage in her masts and rigging, and that little had been repaired by the active exertions of her commander, as soon as the first part of the action in the van had terminated in

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favour of the British arms. *L'Artemise* frigate, stationed on the left of the centre of the French line, fired a broadside at the *Theseus*, and then struck her colours. Captain Miller despatched an officer to take possession of her, but when the boat had arrived within a short distance, she burst into a flame and blew up. This unofficer-like and treacherous conduct will reflect eternal disgrace on the name of *Estandlet*, who commanded her. After having surrendered his ship by striking her ensign and pendant, conscious that he was then secure from immediate danger, he set fire to her, and, with most of his crew, escaped to the shore.

At six o'clock, the *Leander*, having as yet received but little damage, was ordered by signal from the admiral to assist the ships engaged, which she accordingly obeyed. At this time the action between the three British ships, *Alexander*, *Majestic*, and *Theseus*, and the *Guillaume Tell*, *Genereux*, *Tonnant*, and *Timoleon*, had become very distant, as the latter continued imperceptibly to drop to leeward, and the *Theseus* was obliged to veer on two cables to keep within reach of them.

At eight A.M. the *Goliath* bore down and anchored near the *Theseus*, the French ships having brought-up again. The fire of the British was now chiefly turned against the *Heureux* and *Mercure*, which were soon obliged to surrender. The *Timoleon* was ashore, and the *Tonnant* was rendered a complete wreck. Under these circumstances, Rear-Admiral *Villeneuve*, in the *Guillaume Tell*, of 80 guns, perceiving that few, if any, of our ships were in a condition to make sail, resolved to lose no time in escaping from the inevitable fate that would otherwise have awaited him. About eleven o'clock he cut his cable and got under weigh, and his example was followed by the *Genereux*, with the two frigates, *La Justice* and *La Diane*.

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Perceiving their intention, the British admiral by signal ordered the *Zealous* to intercept them. Unfortunately none of the windward ships was in a condition to second this attempt to stop the fugitives. Captain Hood did all that could be done; as they passed him he received and returned the fire of each in succession. The damage he sustained prevented him from tacking, and the admiral, with his usual judgment, gave the signal of recall.

The whole day of the 2^d was employed by the British admiral, his officers, and men, in securing the ships that had struck, and in repairing the damages their own had sustained. Though this business was fully sufficient to occupy their attention, yet his mind was too deeply impressed with gratitude to the Supreme Being, for the success which had crowned his endeavours in the cause of his country, to delay returning public thanks for the divine favour. On the morning of the 2^d, he therefore issued the following memorandum to the different captains of his squadron. "Almighty God having blessed his Majesty's arms with victory, the admiral intends returning public thanksgiving for the same at two o'clock this day, and he recommends every ship doing the same as soon as convenient." Accordingly, at two o'clock, public service was performed on the quarter-deck of the *Vanguard*, by the Rev. Mr. Comyn, the other ships following the example of the admiral, though perhaps not all at the same time. This solemn act of gratitude to Heaven seemed to make a deep impression on many of the prisoners, and some of them even remarked, "that it was no wonder the English officers could maintain such discipline and order, when it was possible to impress the minds of their men with such sentiments, after a victory so great, and at a moment of such seeming confusion."

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The same day, the following memorandum, expressive of the admiral's sentiments of the noble exertions of the different officers and men of his squadron, was sent round to all the ships:—"The admiral most heartily congratulates the captains, officers, seamen, and marines of the squadron he has the honour to command, on the event of the late action; and he desires they will accept his most sincere and cordial thanks for their very gallant behaviour in this glorious battle. It must strike forcibly every British seaman, how superior their conduct is, when in discipline and good order, to the riotous behaviour of lawless Frenchmen. The squadron may be assured the admiral will not fail, with his despatches, to represent their truly meritorious conduct in the strongest terms to the commander-in-chief."

It was not till morning that the *Culloden* could be got off from her disagreeable situation, and it was found that she had suffered considerable damage in her bottom; the rudder was beaten off, and the crew could scarcely keep her afloat with all pumps going. The resources of Captain Troubridge's mind were admirably exerted on this trying occasion: in four days he had a new rudder made on his own deck, which was immediately shipped, and the *Culloden*, though still very leaky, was fit for actual service.

In the morning of the 3^d of August, there remained in the bay only the *Timoleon* and *Tonnant* of the French line that were not taken or destroyed. As these vessels were both dismasted, and consequently could not escape, they were naturally the last of which the conquerors thought of taking possession. The former being aground near the coast, the captain and his crew escaped in their boats, after setting her on fire, and in a short time she blew up. A flag of truce had been sent to the *Tonnant*; but she refused to submit; on the *Theseus* going down.

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to her, followed by the Swiftsure, she struck without further resistance. Her cable had been cut, and she had drifted on shore; but, by the activity of Captain Miller, she was soon got off again, and secured in the British line. This completed the conquest of the French fleet in the bay of Aboukir.

The admiral, knowing that the wounded of his own ships had been taken care of, with his usual humanity made those of the enemy one of the first objects of his attention. He established a truce with the commandant of Aboukir, and through him intimated to the governor of Alexandria, that it was his intention to allow all the wounded Frenchmen to be taken ashore and attended by their own surgeons. This proposal was readily acceded to, and was carried into effect on the following day.

From the official despatches of the admiral the annexed statement of the English and French line of battle is extracted:*

ENGLISH LINE OF BATTLE.

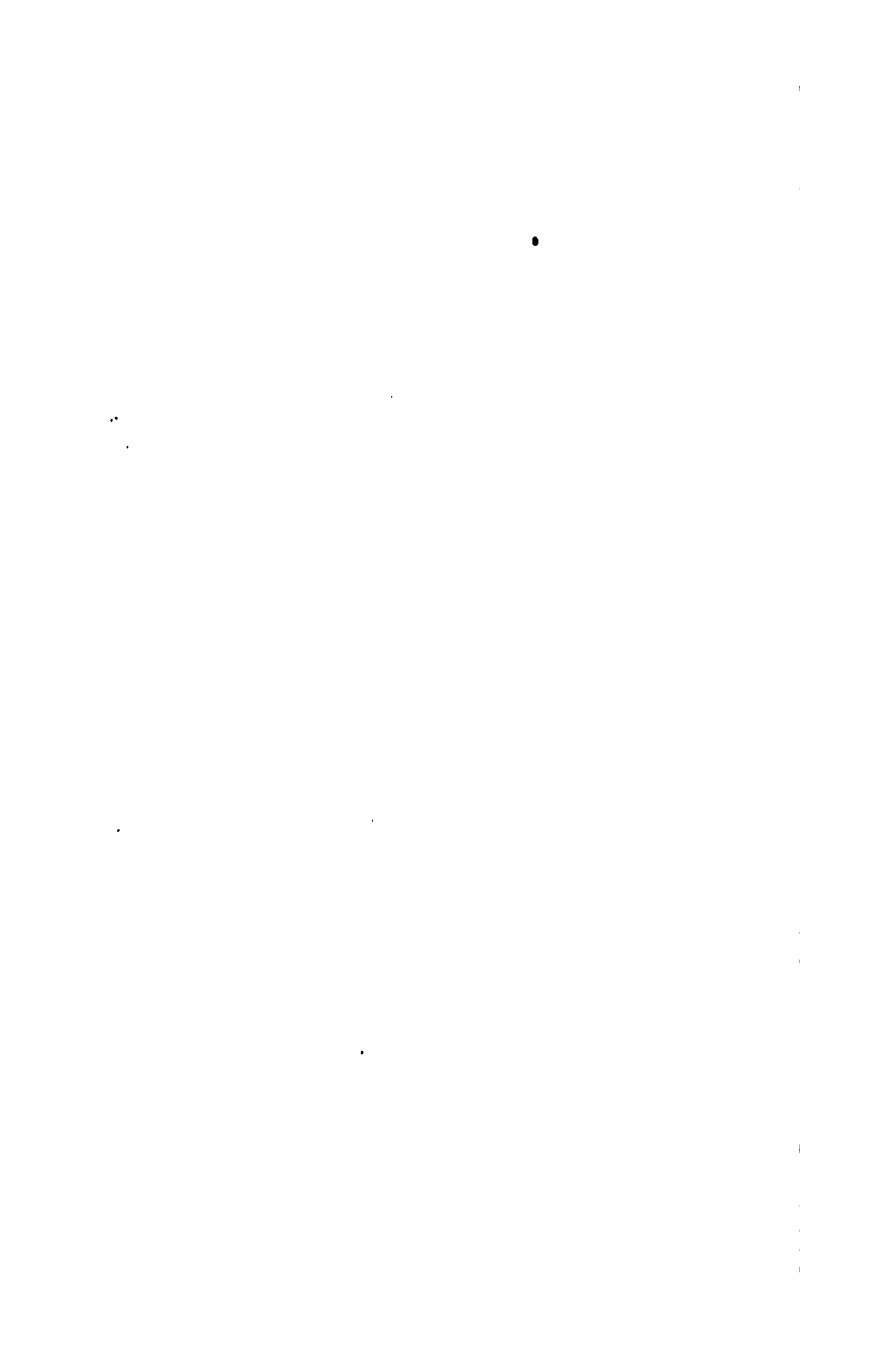
Ships' names.	Captains.	Guns.	Men.
14. Culloden . . .	T. Troubridge . . .	74 .	590
4. Theseus . . .	R. W. Miller . . .	74 .	590
7. Alexander . . .	Alexander J. Ball . . .	74 .	590
8. Vanguard . . .	{ R. Ad. Sir H. Nelson, K.B } Edward Berry	74 .	595
9. Minotaur . . .	Thomas Louis . . .	74 .	640
6. Leander . . .	T. B. Thompson . . .	50 .	343
11. Swiftsure . . .	B. Hallowell . . .	74 .	590
1. Audacious . . .	Davidge Gould . . .	74 .	590
10. Defence . . .	John Peyton . . .	74 .	590
2. Zealous . . .	Samuel Hood . . .	74 .	590
5. Orion . . .	Sir James Saumarez . . .	74 .	590
3. Goliath . . .	Thomas Foley . . .	74 .	590
13. Majestic . . .	George B. Westcott . . .	74 .	590
12. Bellerophon . . .	Henry D. E. Darby . . .	74 .	590
15. La Mutine brig			

N.B. The figures prefixed denote the situation of each ship in the annexed plan.

* There is a grand painting of this battle, by G. Arnold, in the Painted Hall, Greenwich.



Plan of the Battle of the NILE.



Battle of Aboukir.

FRENCH LINE OF BATTLE.

Ships' names.	Commanders.	Guns.	Men.	
A. Le Guerrier	74 .	600 .	Taken
B. Le Conquerant	74 .	700 .	Taken
C. Le Spartiate	74 .	700 .	Taken
D. L'Aquilon	74 .	700 .	Taken
E. Le Souverain Peuple	74 .	700 .	Taken
F. Le Franklin	} Blanquet, 1st contre- admiral	} 80 .	} 800 .	} Taken
G. L'Orient				
H. Le Tonnant	80 .	800 .	Taken
I. L'Heureux	74 .	700 .	Taken
K. Le Timoleon	74 .	700 .	Burnt
M. Le Mercure	74 .	700 .	Taken
L. Le Guillaume Tell	} Villeneuve 2d contre- admiral	} 80 .	} 800 .	} Escaped
N. Le Genereux				

FRIGATES.

Ships.	Guns.	Men.	
Q. La Diane	48 .	300 .	Escaped
R. La Justice	44 .	300 .	Escaped
P. L'Artemise	36 .	250 .	Burnt
O. Le Serieux	36 .	250 .	Dismasted and Sunk.

N.B. The letters prefixed denote the situation of each ship in the plan.

According to these official statements, the French had a superiority of 184 guns and 3162 men. After the action, upwards of 5200 of their number were killed, drowned, burned, or missing. The prisoners and the wounded, to the number of more than three thousand, were sent on shore, on condition of not serving against England till exchanged. It was believed by his captains that, had not the British admiral been so severely wounded, every ship of the enemy would have been taken. On board the English squadron, 16 officers and 202 seamen and marines were killed; 37 officers and 640 seamen and marines were wounded. The principal British officer who

Battle of Aboukir.

fell was Captain Westcott,* of the *Majestic*. That ship, the *Bellerophon*, and the *Vanguard* were the greatest sufferers; their number in killed and wounded considerably exceeding that in all the rest of the squadron.

The French, who viewed the engagement from *Rosetta*, were for some time in a state of cruel uncertainty. Perceiving the four ships which escaped sail away, they concluded that their squadron remained in possession of the place of battle: but this delusion was dispelled by the bonfires kindled by the inhabitants along the coast, who thus expressed their joy at the destruction of their invaders. The shore, to the extent of four leagues, was strewed with wrecks of masts, rigging, gun-carriages, and boats, which

* The history of this gallant officer furnishes a most encouraging lesson to the young seaman, even in the humblest station. He was the son of a baker in Devonshire, and was frequently sent by his father on business to the neighbouring mill. In one of these visits it happened that, from the accidental breaking of a rope, the machine was disordered. Neither the owner nor his man being equal to the task of repairing the damage, young Westcott offered to use his skill in splicing the rope, although attended with considerable difficulty and danger. The miller complied, and was so well pleased with the manner in which the job was executed, that he told him he was fit for a sailor, since he could splice so well: adding that, if he should ever have an inclination to go to sea, he would get him a birth. The proposal was accepted by the lad; an opportunity presented itself, and he began his naval career in the humble capacity of a cabin-boy. In this situation he contrived to exercise his abilities to such good purpose, and evinced such acuteness of understanding, that it was not long before he was introduced among the midshipmen. Farther advancement was the reward of his good conduct, and he became so signally conspicuous both for skill and bravery, that he was rapidly promoted to the honourable station in which he lost his life. Had he survived the battle of the Nile, his seniority of appointment would have obtained him an admiral's flag. A handsome monument has been erected to his memory, at the public expence, in *St. Paul's cathedral*.

Nelson sends News of the Victory to Bombay.

the wandering Arabs employed themselves in collecting and burning on the beach, for the sake of the iron attached to them. The whole bay of Aboukir was for many days covered with floating corpses, so as to exhibit a most painful spectacle; and although all possible efforts were made to sink them whenever they appeared, yet, as the shot used for the purpose frequently slipped off, they were perpetually rising again to the surface in such numbers, as, coupled with the extreme heat of the weather, to excite apprehensions of some pestilential disease.

On the 5th of August, as soon as a ship could be made sufficiently seaworthy for the voyage, the admiral despatched Captain Berry in the *Leander*, with his official letter, announcing the victory to Earl St. Vincent: but, as if he had foreseen the fate of that ship, he prepared a copy of the same letter, with some others, with the intention of forwarding them by the Honourable Captain Capel, late first-lieutenant of the *Vanguard*, whom he had promoted to the command of the *Mutine* brig, to Naples, whence he was to proceed over-land to England. While the *Mutine* was getting ready for this purpose, the squadron was fortunate enough to intercept the despatches of the French commander-in-chief in Egypt, on their way to France. The same day Nelson despatched a letter to the governor of Bombay, briefly acquainting him with the late victory, and communicating all the information that he could collect relative to the movements and future intentions of the French army in Egypt, whose ultimate object he confidently believed to be the attack of our Indian possessions. Lieutenant Duval, R. N.; who volunteered his services to take charge of this despatch, was ordered to proceed by way of Alexandretta, Aleppo, and Bussorah, to Bombay, and directed to draw upon the British consuls, and even British merchants, on his route, on

Disposal of the Prizes.

account of the East India Company. "If I have done wrong," says the admiral in his letter on this subject to the president of the Board of Control, "I hope the bills will be paid, and I will repay the Company; for, as an Englishman, I shall be proud that it has been in my power to be the means of putting our settlements on their guard." This precaution was attended with very important and beneficial results. The East India Company were at that very time engaged in extensive preparations for opposing any force which the French, in conjunction with Tippoo Saib, might send against their possessions; and this timely intelligence, by quieting any apprehensions on that score, saved the great expenditure which the prosecution of those preparations must have occasioned.

Three of the frigates, whose absence the admiral had so deeply lamented during his chase of the French fleet, joined the squadron, on the 13th of August, and the fourth a few days afterwards. By these he received secret orders from Earl St. Vincent, relative to important operations to be carried on in the Mediterranean, which required his immediate departure for Naples. He, therefore, directed Sir James Saumarez, with seven sail of the line, to proceed with six of the prizes, * being all that were ready for sea, to Gibraltar; and the three others he ordered to be burnt, after saving such stores as it would not take too much time to remove. "It would have taken a month at least," he thus wrote to the Admiralty, "to have fitted those ships for a passage to Gibraltar, not only at a great expence to

* These were the Franklin, Tonnant, Spartiate, Aquilon, Conquerant, and Souverain Peuple, the hulls of which were purchased by the Navy Board for £117,000. The name of the Franklin was changed to Canopus, Aquilon to Aboukir, and Souverain Peuple to Guerrier.

Disposal of the Prizes.

government, but with the loss of the services of at least two sail of the line. I rest assured," he continued, "that they will be paid for, and have held out that assurance to the squadron. For, if an admiral, after a victory, is to look after the captured ships, and not to the distressing of the enemy, very dearly, indeed, must the nation pay for the prizes. I trust that £60,000 will be deemed a very moderate sum for them: and, when the services, time, and men, with the expence of fitting the three ships for a voyage to England, are considered, government will save nearly as much as they are valued at.—Paying for prizes," he farther observed, "is no new idea of mine, and would often prove an amazing saving to the state, even without taking into calculation what the nation loses by the attention of admirals to the property of the captors — an attention absolutely necessary, as a recompence for the exertions of the officers and men. An admiral may be amply rewarded by his own feelings, and by the approbation of his superiors; but what reward have the inferior officers and men but the value of the prizes? If an admiral takes that from them on any consideration, he cannot expect to be well supported."

In his letter to the first lord of the Admiralty, written before he was joined by his frigates, he makes use of this emphatic expression: "Were I to die this moment, *want of frigates* would be found stamped on my heart. No words of mine can express what I have suffered and am suffering for want of them."

The Mutine being at length ready, these letters were despatched by her on the 16th of August. By the same conveyance, Sir Horatio sent the sword of the captured French admiral Blanquet, with a letter to the lord mayor, requesting that the city of London would honour him by the acceptance of it, "as a remembrance that Britannia still rules the waves."

Rejoicings at Naples on account of the Victory.

Having left Captain Hood in the *Zealous*, with the *Swiftsure*, *Goliath*, and three frigates, to blockade the port of Alexandria, the admiral sailed on the 18th for Naples.

Captain Capel, immediately on his arrival at Naples, wrote to the admiral. "I am totally unable," he says, "to express the joy that appeared on every countenance, and the bursts of applause and acclamations we received. The queen and Lady Hamilton fainted; in short, they hail you as the saviour of Europe." Other letters from Naples reached him by the same conveyance, and enabled him, when at sea, writing to Lady Nelson, to furnish further particulars of the joy excited by his victory. "The Kingdom of the Two Sicilies is mad with joy; from the throne to the peasant, all are alike. According to Lady Hamilton's letter, the situation of the queen was truly pitiable. I only hope I shall not have to be witness to a renewal of it. I give you Lady Hamilton's own words: 'How shall I describe the transports of the queen? 'Tis not possible. She cried, kissed her husband, her children, walked frantic about the room; cried, kissed, and embraced every person near her, exclaiming, O, brave Nelson! O, God, bless and protect our brave deliverer! O, Nelson, Nelson, what do we not owe you! O, victor, saviour of Italy! O, that my swollen heart could now tell him personally what we owe him!' You may judge of the rest: but my head will not allow me to tell you half; so much for that. My fag without success would have had no effect; but, blessed be God for his goodness to me!"

The "poor wretched Vanguard," as Nelson himself calls her, arrived at Naples on the 22nd of September, to refit. His reception there is thus described in a letter to Lady Nelson. "I must endeavour to convey to you something of what passed; but, if it were so

Reception of Nelson at Naples.

affecting to those who were only united to me by the bonds of friendship, what must it be to my dearest wife, my friend, my every thing which is most dear to me in this world!—Sir William and Lady Hamilton came out to sea, attended by numerous boats, with emblems, &c. They had really been laid up, and seriously ill; first from anxiety, and then from joy. It was imprudently told Lady Hamilton in a moment, and the effect was like a shot; she fell apparently dead, and is not yet perfectly recovered from severe bruises. Alongside came my honoured friends: the scene in the boat was terribly affecting. Up flew her ladyship, and, exclaiming, ‘O, God! is it possible!’ she fell into my arms more dead than alive. Tears, however, soon set matters to rights; when alongside came the king. The scene was in its way as interesting; he took me by the hand, called me his deliverer and preserver, with every other expression of kindness. In short, all Naples calls me *nostro liberatore*. My greeting from the lower classes was truly affecting.”

It is related that at this first interview with his friends on board the Vanguard, while they were taking some refreshment in his cabin, a small bird, having entered by the window, perched familiarly upon his shoulder. This circumstance being remarked, “It is,” said he, “a singular thing that a bird of the same kind came on board the day before the battle of the Nile; and I have known similar instances of birds coming into my cabin previously to former engagements.” This is the more remarkable, as the same thing is said to have subsequently occurred before the battle of Copenhagen.

The king, who had gone out in the royal barge, full three leagues into the bay, to meet the victorious admiral, remained on board the Vanguard till she anchored, when he returned to the city in his barge,

Letter from the Queen of Naples, relative to the Victory.

and Nelson accompanied Sir William and Lady Hamilton to their residence. The carriage was surrounded by crowds of people, eager to show every possible demonstration of joy and gratitude. The lazzaroni, in particular, thronged around in multitudes, many of them holding up wicker cages, containing birds of various kinds, which they set at liberty, in token of rejoicing. He was introduced the same day to the queen, a daughter of the Austrian empress Maria Theresa, and sister to the ill-fated Marie Antoinette of France. Naples had been threatened with a visit from the French, who had overrun all the rest of Italy; and such was the mis-government of the court, that great numbers, even of well-meaning persons, had been ready to put an end to it by promoting the designs of the invaders. The victory of Aboukir produced a great change in public opinion, and excited a spirit of self-defence, which seemed to promise a determined resistance to the projects of the French. These circumstances sufficiently account for the unbounded joy manifested by the court on this occasion. Its vehemence may be inferred from the terms in which the queen herself wrote to the Neapolitan ambassador in London. "I write to you," she says, "with joy inexpressible. The brave and enterprising British Admiral, Nelson, has obtained a most signal and decisive victory. My heart would fain give wings to the courier who is the bearer of these propitious tidings, to accelerate the earliest acknowledgment of our gratitude. So extensive is this victory, in all its relative circumstances, that, were not the world accustomed to behold prodigies of glory achieved by the English on the seas, I should almost question the reality of the event. It has produced among us a general spirit of enthusiasm. It would have moved you much to have seen my infant boys and girls hanging round my neck in tears, and

Nelson's Opinion of the Italians.

expressing their joy at the happy tidings, rendered doubly dear to us by the critical period at which they arrived. The news of the defeat of Bonaparte's Egyptian fleet has made many disaffected less daring, and improved the prospect of the general good. Make my highest respects acceptable to their Majesties of England. Recommend the gallant hero, Nelson, to his royal master. He has excited in the Italians an enthusiastic reverence for the English nation. Great expectations were naturally founded on his enterprising talents, but no one could look for such a total overthrow of the enemy. All here are frantic with excess of joy."

The 29th of September, the anniversary of Nelson's birth, when he completed his fortieth year, was celebrated with extraordinary splendour by Sir William and Lady Hamilton. At an expence of two thousand ducats, they entertained upwards of seven-hundred of the nobility and gentry of Naples with a ball and supper, all the arrangements of which, as he himself remarked, were enough to fill him with vanity. "Every ribbon, every button, has Nelson, &c. The whole service is marked H. N. Glorious 1st of August." In spite of all this homage, his mind could not reconcile itself to the general character and politics of the Neapolitans. Before his arrival he had written to the commander-in-chief, "I detest this voyage to Naples; nothing but absolute necessity could force me to the measure. Again, on the 30th of September, he says:—"What precious moments the courts of Naples and Vienna are losing! Three months would liberate Italy; but this court is so enervated that the happy moment will be lost. I am very unwell, and the miserable conduct of this court is not likely to cool my irritable temper. It is a country of fiddlers and poets, whores and scoundrels." Subsequent events furnished but too com-

Nelson created a Peer.

plete a justification of this seemingly harsh judgment.

Captain Berry, the bearer of the admiral's despatches to the Earl of St. Vincent, was taken in the *Leander*, after a well contested engagement, a few days after she had left the theatre of action, by the *Genereux* of 74 guns, one of the French ships which had effected their escape. It was, therefore, not till the arrival of Captain Capel, on the 2^d of October, that the news of the glorious event reached London. Never was exultation more general. Public rejoicings and illuminations were continued for several days, and a subscription was immediately opened for the relief of the widows and children of the men who had fallen. On the 6th, his majesty created the brave admiral a peer of Great Britain, by the title of Baron Nelson of the Nile, and of Burnham Thorpe, in the county of Norfolk, with a pension of £2000 for his own life and the lives of his two immediate successors. When Mr. Pitt moved the granting of this pension in the House of Commons, General Walpole, who seconded the motion, contended that a higher degree of rank ought to be conferred on the victor. Mr. Pitt, in reply, observed that, 'entertaining the highest sense of the transcendent merits of Admiral Nelson, he thought it needless to enter at any length into the question of rank. His fame must be coeval with the British name; and it would be remembered, that he had obtained the greatest naval victory on record, when no man would think it worth his while to ask whether he had been created a baron, a viscount, or an earl.' Mr. Johnes declared that, 'in his opinion, the consequences of Lord Nelson's achievement were such as to entitle him to the appellation of *the saviour of mankind.*' So much is certain that the nation would not have grudged either a higher degree of rank or an increased pension for the due support of its dig-

Presents made to the Admiral.

nity : and when it is recollected that an earldom was the reward of the conqueror in the battle of St. Vincent, all must agree that the gratitude of ministers for the infinitely more important victory of Aboukir was doled out with a very parsimonious hand.

These, however, were not the only rewards bestowed by his grateful countrymen. The East-India Company, conscious of the critical situation from which their possessions had been rescued by his intrepidity, presented him with ten thousand pounds; the city of London with a sword, valued at two hundred guineas; and the Turkey Company with a piece of plate of great value. The captains of the fleet, under his command, likewise ordered an elegant sword to be made and presented to his lordship, the hilt to represent a crocodile, with the names of the ships and their commanders engraved upon it. The thanks of both houses of parliament in England and Ireland had been previously voted to the admiral, and to the captains, officers, seamen, and marines, for the resolute and intrepid conduct which they displayed on this occasion. The captains were ordered to be presented with gold medals, emblematical of the victory. The appointment of Captain Hardy to the Vanguard was confirmed; and the first lieutenants of the line of battle ships, excepting the Culloden, which, as we have seen, had been prevented from sharing in the action, were promoted to be masters and commanders.

Nelson's high opinion of the merits of Captain Troubridge, and his attachment to that brave officer, had been strongly expressed on many occasions: and now that an intention was shown to exclude the Culloden from the honours of the 1st of August, the admiral could not refrain from pleading his cause with all the characteristic warmth of his generous heart. Immediately after the engagement, he had

Nelson's Interference in behalf of Troubridge.

endeavoured to soothe the mortified feelings of Troubridge by saying, in conversation with himself: "Let us rejoice that the ship which got on shore was commanded by an officer whose character is so thoroughly established." To the commander-in-chief he wrote: "I consider Captain Troubridge's conduct as fully entitled to praise as any one officer in the squadron, and as highly deserving reward. He commanded a division equally with Sir James Saumarez; and I should feel distressed if any honour which is granted to one be not granted to the other. . . . The eminent services of our friend deserve the very highest rewards. It was Troubridge who equipped the squadron so soon at Syracuse; it was Troubridge who exerted himself for me after the action; it was Troubridge who saved the Culloden, when none that I know in the service would have attempted it." To the first lord of the Admiralty he wrote in a similar strain: "I observe what your lordship is pleased to say, relative to the presenting myself and the captains who served under me with medals, and also that the first lieutenants of the ships engaged will be distinguished by promotions, as well as the senior marine officers. I hope and believe the word 'engaged' is not intended to exclude the Culloden: the merits of that ship and her gallant captain are too well known to benefit by any thing I could say. Her misfortune was great in getting aground, while her more fortunate companions were in the full tide of happiness. No; I am confident that my good Lord Spencer will never add misery to misfortune. Captain Troubridge on shore is superior to captains afloat. In the midst of his great misfortunes, he made those signals which prevented certainly the Alexander and Swiftsure from running on the shoals. I beg your pardon for writing on a subject which, I verily believe, has never entered your lordship's head;

Nelson's Interference in behalf of Troubridge.

but my heart, as it ought to be, is warm to my gallant friends." And he again urges the subject on the attention of Lord St. Vincent in these terms :— "I received yesterday a private letter from Lord Spencer, saying that the first lieutenants of all the ships engaged would be promoted. I sincerely hope that is not intended to exclude the first of the Culloden. For Heaven's sake, for my sake, if it be so, get it altered! Our dear friend Troubridge has suffered enough; and no one knows from me but Culloden was as much engaged as any ship in the squadron. . . . He deserves every reward which a grateful country can bestow on the most meritorious sea-officer of his standing in the service." It is a fact that Nelson would not wear his own gold medal given by his majesty till he had succeeded in his efforts to obtain one for his friend Troubridge, which had at first been withheld from him by the strictness of official etiquette: and the Admiral's remonstrance in behalf of the first lieutenant of the Culloden drew from Lord Spencer a direction to Earl St. Vincent to give that officer the first vacancy of commander that should arise.

Among other medals struck on this memorable occasion, that which was executed at the expence of Mr. Alexander Davison, whom Nelson had appointed agent for the prizes, deserves particular mention. It was presented, struck in gold, to the admiral and every captain of the British squadron; in silver, to every other commissioned and warrant officer; in gilt metal, to every petty officer; and in copper, to every seaman and marine serving on board during the action. The cost of this munificent tribute to patriotism and friendship was little less than two thousand pounds.

While the hero of the Nile and his "brave band of brothers" were receiving distinctions from their grateful country, foreign nations likewise expressed the

Magnificent Present from the Grand Signor.

high sense which they entertained of their exploits. As soon as the news of the victory reached Constantinople, the Grand Signor ordered a superb aigrette, called a chelengk, or plume of triumph, to be taken from one of the imperial turbans, and to be sent to the admiral, together with a pelisse lined and enriched with sable fur of the first quality, and a request to his Britannic majesty that the conqueror might be permitted to wear them. In a letter written by the monarch himself, the chelengk was described as a badge usually conferred on Mussulman commanders as a reward for splendid victories, and never before given to any unbeliever; "being a blaze of brilliants, crowned with a vibrating plumage, and a radiant star in the middle, turning on its centre by means of watch-work, which winds up behind. This badge," continues the imperial donor, "can hardly, according to the idea of such insignia here, [Constantinople] be considered as less than equivalent to the first order of chivalry in Christendom: such, at least, was my view in the donation." This superb jewel resembles, in figure, a hand with thirteen fingers, in allusion to the thirteen ships taken and destroyed on the 1st of August, being as large as the open hand of a child five or six years old. The centre diamond and the four surrounding it were estimated to be worth £1000 each, and it contained upwards of three hundred diamonds of smaller size. The total value of this chelengk was estimated at eighteen thousand dollars: "if it were worth a million," says Nelson writing to his wife, "my pleasure would be to see it in your possession." The Grand Signor accompanied these valuable presents with a purse of two thousand sequins to be distributed among the British seamen who had been wounded in the battle. From the sultana mother the admiral received a rose formed of diamonds; from the Emperor Paul a complimen-

Augmentations to Nelson's Armorial Ensigns.

tary letter written with his own hand, accompanied with a portrait of his imperial majesty, most superbly set in brilliants ; from the King of Sardinia a letter and a box set with diamonds ; and from the inhabitants of the island of Zante, a gold-headed sword and cane, as an acknowledgment that, but for the battle of the Nile, they should not have been liberated from French domination. His own sovereign was pleased to grant these honourable augmentations to his armorial ensigns — a chief undulated, argent, thereon waves of the sea ; from which a palm-tree issuant, between a disabled ship on the dexter and a ruinous battery on the sinister, all proper ; and for his crest, on a naval crown, *or*, chelengk or plume of triumph, presented to him by the Grand Signor, with the motto, “*Palmas qui meruit ferat* :” and to his supporters, being a sailor on the dexter and a lion on the sinister, the honourable augmentations following — in the hand of the sailor a palm-branch, and another in the paw of the lion, both proper, with the addition of a tri-coloured flag and staff in the mouth of the latter.

It may well be doubted if any of these presents and distinctions gave him more sincere satisfaction than that which he must have experienced from the congratulations of a brother seaman on his glorious victory. “*I know not*,” wrote Admiral Goodall, “*where to place the preference in my praises ; whether in the boldness of the attempt, or in the skill with which it was conducted, unrivalled in our annals. I had often been obliged to stand in the breach against the senseless criticisms of the noble and ignoble of this country : you know them to be governed by the tide of swollen and immediate success. How often have I been questioned, ‘What is your favourite hero about ? The French fleet has passed under his nose,’ &c., &c. To all of which I uniformly answered,*

Letter from Admiral Goodall.

‘ I know him well ; if Fortune has not crowned his labour and anxiety in the event, yet something capital will be done. I know him and most of his gallant companions who are to support him in the day of battle. You will not hear from him until he has thundered in the storm, and directed the whirlwind that will overwhelm the enemy.’ My opinion has been entirely confirmed. Your gallantry, my dear friend, has silenced both jealousy and censure, and raised a name which will exist as long as history or monumental tablets are preserved.”

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM 1798 TO 1800.

SITUATION OF NAPLES—PREPARATIONS FOR ITS DEFENCE—BLOCKADE OF MALTA—ROUT OF THE NEAPOLITAN ARMY—REMOVAL OF THE ROYAL FAMILY TO PALERMO—SIR SIDNEY SMITH APPOINTED TO CO-OPERATE WITH THE TURKS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN—NAPLES TAKEN BY THE FRENCH—NELSON'S ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DEFENCE OF SICILY—REDUCTION OF THE ISLANDS IN THE BAY OF NAPLES—REMARKABLE PRESENT MADE TO NELSON—EVACUATION OF NAPLES BY THE FRENCH—NELSON RETURNS TO THE BAY OF NAPLES—TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF PRINCE CARACCIOLI—REDUCTION OF THE CASTLE OF ST. ELMO, CAPUA, AND GAETA—THE KING OF NAPLES CONFERS ON NELSON THE DUKEDOM AND ESTATE OF BRONTE—OPERATIONS AGAINST THE FRENCH IN THE ROMAN STATES—NELSON SAILS TO MINORCA, AND RETURNS TO PALERMO—OPERATIONS AGAINST MALTA—NELSON TAKES LE GENEREUX—CAPTURE OF THE GUILLAUME TELL—NELSON RETURNS TO ENGLAND.

THE situation of Naples, at the time of Nelson's arrival from Egypt, was precarious in the extreme. Bonaparte, before he quitted the Italian army, had dictated to the emperor of Germany a peace, which left the French in unmolested possession of northern and central Italy, by binding up the hands of the Pope and the petty princes who were still suffered to retain a shadow of independence. They were now augmenting their force in the Peninsula, with the avowed purpose of overturning the Neapolitan monarchy, and erecting a republic in its stead.

The rulers of Naples were not equal to this emergency. The king, Ferdinand, belonged to the family of the Spanish Bourbons, and, like the other princes of that house, was so passionately attached to the sports of the field, as to relinquish the cares of go-

State of Naples on Nelson's Return from Egypt.

vernment to the queen and the ministers. The queen, a princess of haughty and vindictive disposition, had so estranged the affections of a great portion even of the principal nobility and gentry by her measures, that they were ready to promote any change which seemed to hold out a promise of deliverance from the prevailing system of misrule. A more striking picture of its profligacy cannot be given than that which is presented by the admiral himself, in a letter to Earl Spencer. "I see," said he, "the finest country in the world, full of resources, yet without enough to supply the public wants: all are plundering who can get at public money or stores. In my own line I can speak. A Neapolitan ship of the line would cost more than ten English ships fitting out. Five sail of the line must ruin the country. Every thing else is, I have no doubt, going on in the same system of thieving: I could give your lordship so many instances of the greatest mal-conduct of persons in office, and of those very people being rewarded. If money could be placed in the public chest at this moment, I believe it would be well used: for the sad thing in this country is that, although much is raised, yet very little reaches the public chest. I will give you a fact. When the Order of Jesuits was suppressed in this country and Sicily, they possessed very large estates: although these, with every other part of their property, were seized by the crown, yet, to this moment, not one farthing has reached the public chest. On the contrary, some years the pretended expence of management was more than the produce. Taxes have been sold for sums of money, which now are five times more than when sold. This, it is true, was done by viceroys, to please their distant masters."

It is not to be supposed, that the persons selected to administer the government were a whit better

Preparations for Repelling a French Invasion.

than the rest. Of the prime minister, the Marquis de Gallo, the admiral says: "This marquis I detest. . . . he admires his ribbon, ring, and snuff-box, so much, that an excellent *petit-maitre* was spoiled when he was made a minister." On another occasion, he observes, "As for this minister, I do not understand him. We are different men. He has been bred in a court, and I in a rough element." Such were some of the persons to whom the destinies of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies were committed, when Nelson, by his energetic appeals to the royal family, decided the court to take the field, for the defence of the throne. "I ventured," he says, "to tell their majesties that one of the following things must happen to the king, and he had his choice— 'either advance, trusting to God for his blessing on a just cause, to die *l'épée à la main*, or remain quiet, and be kicked out of your kingdom.'" Of General Mack, who was appointed to the command of the army, which the king intended to join in person, and whom Nelson was invited to meet at dinner by their majesties, he pithily observes: "General Mack cannot move without five carriages. I have formed my opinion—I heartily pray, I may be mistaken." It was determined that 30,000 men should march, as soon as they could be equipped, to cover the kingdom from the threatened invasion; and that 15,000 should be ready on the frontier, to support the first army for the garrison of Rome, and to keep open the communication with Naples, if the Romans should retract their offer of joining in the expulsion of the French from their territory.

While these preparations were going forward, Nelson, who had sent Captain Ball, in the *Alexander*, to commence the blockade of Malta, followed himself, on the 15th of September, with the *Vanguard*, *Mino-taur*, *Audacious*, *Goliath*, and *Mutine*, having pre-

Proceedings at Malta.

viously promised the king to return to Naples in the first week of November, for the purpose of seconding the movements of his army. "In thus acquiescing in the desire of the King of Naples," he says, in a letter to the commander-in-chief, "I give up my plan, which was to have gone to Egypt, and attended to the destruction of the French shipping in that quarter; but, I hope that, before Captain Hood quits his station, both the Turkish and Russian squadrons will be on that coast, when all will be right, I hope, although I own myself not willing to trust any of our allies to do that which we could perform ourselves. I have reason for thinking that the strong wish for our squadron being on the coast of Naples is that, in case of any mishap, their majesties think their persons would be much safer under the protection of the British flag than any other."

The French force in Malta then consisted of about 3,000 soldiers and sailors, and 100 Maltese. The *Guillaume Tell*, and the two frigates which had escaped from Aboukir, were lying in the harbour. Shortly before Lord Nelson's arrival, the Maltese, irritated by the plunder of their churches, had risen against the invaders; about ten thousand of them were in arms, but their memorial to the King of Naples, soliciting succour, had not been attended to. On the 24th of October, the admiral arrived off Malta, where he found Captain Ball and the Marquis de Niza, with three Portuguese ships, engaged in the blockade. He instantly summoned both *La Valette* and *Gozo*. The latter island capitulated a few days afterwards. Meanwhile all possible aid was afforded to the insurgent Maltese. "The total neglect," says Nelson, remonstrating with the British envoy at Naples, "with which they have been treated, appears to me cruel in the extreme. Had not the English supplied fifteen hundred stand of arms, with bayonets,

Proceedings at Malta.

cartouch-boxes, and ammunition, and the marquis supplied some few, and kept the spirit of these brave islanders from falling off, they must long ago have bowed to the French yoke. . . . I wonder how they have kept on the defensive so long. At least two thousand stand of small arms, complete, ammunition, &c., should be sent; for offence, two or three large mortars, fifteen hundred shells, with all necessaries, and perhaps a few artillery. The Bormola, and all the left side of the harbour, with this assistance, will fall. Ten thousand men are required to defend those works; the French can only spare twelve hundred: therefore, a vigorous assault being made in many parts, some one must succeed. And, whom," he indignantly proceeds, "have the government of Naples sent to lead and encourage these people? A very good, and, I daresay, brave old man, enervated and shaking with the palsy. This is the sort of man that they have sent, without any supply, without even a promise of protection, and without his bringing any answer to the repeated respectful memorials of these people to the sovereign. The officer sent here should have brought supplies, promises of protection, and an answer from the king to their memorials. He should have been a man of judgment, bravery, and activity. He should be the first to lead them to glory, and the last, when necessary, to retreat — the first to mount the wall of the Bormola, and never to quit it. This is the man to send. Such, many such, are to be found. If he succeeds, promise him rewards: my life for it, the business would soon be over." Having despatched the Marquis de Niza before him to Naples, and again summoned Gozo, which capitulated on the 30th to Captain Ball, he left that officer in the Alexander, with three sail of the line, a frigate, and a fire-ship, to continue the blockade of Malta. Gozo was taken possession of in the name of his Britannic

Plan of the Campaign.

majesty, whose colours were hoisted; but next day it was delivered up in form to the deputies of the island, who hoisted the colours of the king of the Two Sicilies, and acknowledged him as their sovereign.

A few days after the return of the admiral to Naples, he went, on the 12th of November, to the camp of San Germano, to attend a grand review of the Neapolitan army, pronounced by General Mack to be "the finest army in Europe," "and, as far as my judgment goes in these matters," says Nelson, "I agree that a finer army cannot be." In the evening, a council was held, to concert the operations for opening the campaign. It was settled that four thousand infantry, and six hundred cavalry, should be conveyed to Leghorn in the British and Portuguese ships, and one belonging to Naples. Meanwhile, the king, with Mack as commander-in-chief, was to march, "with thirty thousand of the finest troops in Europe," for Rome, and to keep advancing, trusting to the support of the emperor of Austria. A courier from London and Vienna, who arrived in the following night, disappointed this expectation; the Austrian minister declined to stir till the French had committed some act of aggression. "But," says Nelson, "it is aggression, if this court knows — if all the world knows — that the French are collecting an army to overrun Naples, in a week destroy the monarchy, and make it a republic. As this is fully known, surely it is aggression of the most serious nature. The emperor's troops have not yet been in the habit of retaking kingdoms, and it is easier to destroy than to restore." The court had also the mortification to learn that no money had been sent from England. Nelson told them that, "if England saw every exertion made to save themselves, John Bull was never backward in supporting his friends in distress." At

Nelson Sails with an Expedition to Leghorn.

the review just mentioned, a whimsical circumstance occurred, which by no means tended to raise Mack in Nelson's estimation. In directing the evolutions of a sham fight, it so happened that his own troops were completely surrounded by those representing the enemy. Vexed at the inauspicious blunder, Nelson exclaimed to his surrounding friends, "This fellow does not understand his business!"

While preparations for the expedition to Leghorn were making, their majesties, considering the indifferent state of Nelson's health, signified, through Lady Hamilton, their desire that he would not encounter the fatigue, but send the troops, and himself remain at Naples. "Inform her majesty," was his reply, "that, in order to succeed, it is my custom not to say, 'Go!' but — 'Let us go!'"

On the arrival of the squadron in Leghorn road, no time was lost in sending a summons to the governor, who immediately capitulated, and the troops landed, and took possession of the town and fortress. It seemed, however, as if Nelson was destined to experience nothing but disappointment in his co-operation with Italians. The Neapolitan general, Naselli, refused his assent to the seizure of the French vessels at Leghorn, under pretext that his sovereign was not at war with France, and his opinion was supported by the Duke di Sangro, the Sicilian minister at the court of Florence. The vexation which these impolitic scruples excited in the determined mind of Nelson is not to be described. In remonstrating on this subject with the Honourable Mr. Wyndham, the British envoy, he says: "I have been thinking all night of the General Naselli and the Duke di Sangro's saying that the king of Naples had not declared war against the French. Now, I assert that he has, and in a much stronger manner than the ablest minister in Europe could write a de-

Nelson urges the Seizure of the French Vessels.

claration of war. Has not the king received, as a conquest made by him, the republican flag, taken at Gozo? Is not the king's flag flying there, and at Malta, not only by the king's absolute permission, but by his orders? Is not his flag shot at every day by the French, and returned from batteries bearing the king's flag? Are not two frigates and a corvette placed under my orders?—and they would fight the French, meet them where they may. Has not the king sent publicly from Naples guns, mortars, &c., with officers and artillery, to fight against the French in Malta? If these acts are not tantamount to any written paper, I give up all knowledge of what is war." These arguments in favour of the seizure of the vessels in the port belonging to France, and the Ligurian republic, as Genoa was now called, he reinforced by another, which perhaps had greater influence on the decision of the Neapolitan general. He represented that, if the French should find all other schemes fail, they might, by setting fire to one vessel, destroy all the others, and ruin the port for twenty years. Naselli agreed to lay an embargo on all the vessels in the port, till orders for the disposal of them should be received from his sovereign. Among these were a number of French privateers, capable of doing great mischief to our commerce, if they had been permitted to depart; and, about seventy, belonging to the Ligurian republic, ready to sail, laden with corn for Genoa and France; the arrival of which would have expedited the entrance of more French troops into Italy. In a letter, written soon after his return to Naples, on the subject of the same vessels, the admiral says: "I rejoice to hear that the cargoes of corn in the mole of Leghorn will be landed, and the privateers disarmed, and the scoundrels belonging to them sent away. The enemy will be distressed; and, thank God! I shall get no money. The world,

He returns to Naples.

I know, think that money is our God, and now they will be undeceived, as far as relates to us. 'Down, down, with the French!' is my constant prayer." This thorough detestation of the French was expressed with seaman-like bluntness, whilst he was at Naples, when his friends would have persuaded him to visit his prisoner, Admiral Blanquet, whose nose had been shot off, and who had been otherwise severely wounded in the face, on the 1st of August. "No," said Nelson, "I have beaten him, and I will not insult him. Seeing me will only put him in mind of his misfortune. I have an antipathy to Frenchmen so powerful, that I must, I think, have received it from my mother at my birth."

Having left Captain Troubridge, with the Culloden, Minotaur, Terpsichore, and Bonne Citoyenne, at Leghorn, to act as circumstances might require, Nelson sailed in the Vanguard for Naples, where he arrived on the 5th of December, after an absence of only ten days. On his return, he was overwhelmed with complimentary odes and poems of all sorts on the battle of the Nile. Among others, Father M'Cormick, a mendicant Irish priest, of the order of St. Francis, presented an English composition, which, though possessing little merit, was remarkable for predicting that Rome should be taken by Nelson's ships. This passage struck the admiral, and he represented to the friar the impossibility of ascending the Tiber with ships to act against Rome. Father M'Cormick put a bold front on the matter. "I see, nevertheless," said he, "that it will come to pass." Nelson ordered his secretary to give the poor man a few dollars, and for a time the friar and his prediction were alike forgotten.

During the admiral's absence, the fate of Naples had been decided by the cowardice and treachery of the officers who commanded the army. The king

Rout of the Neapolitan Army.

had, indeed, placed himself at its head; but it was a fact well known to the captains of the English squadron that many of these troops, officers and men, had been raised by Le Combe St. Michel, a French artillery officer, who had held the appointment of ambassador from the Republic. Having ingratiated himself with the king, and been furnished with money, Michel selected such persons only as he knew to be favourably disposed towards the French. The event was such as might have been expected. The army took possession of Rome, where the Castle of St. Angelo continued to hold out. Mack, with 20,000 fine young men, but, with few exceptions, badly officered—Nelson described the officers as seeming “alarmed at a drawn sword, or a gun, if loaded with shot”—marched for Civita Castellana, where 13,000 French had taken post. The right wing, under Generals St. Philip and Michel, were to take post between Ancona and Rome, to cut off supplies and communications. Near Fermi they fell in with a body of the enemy, about 3,000 in number. After a little distant firing, St. Philip advanced, and spoke to the French general; then, returning to his men, said, “I no longer command you.” “Then, you are an enemy!” cried a sergeant, and, levelling his musket, shot him through the arm. This did not prevent his advancing with his countrymen, and joining in the pursuit of Michel, who fled with such precipitation that cannon, tents, baggage, and military chest, were all left behind. In this scandalous affair the Neapolitans lost but forty men, their flight having been protected by two regiments of cavalry, who killed many of the French: but the pursuers “having,” says Nelson, “got the good things, did not run after an army three times their number.”

Mack, with the main body, finding his communications with Fermi cut off by this rout, retreated

The King prepares to leave his Capital.

towards Castellana. He was attacked by the way from an entrenchment of the enemy, which it was necessary to carry. His troops would not advance; he dismounted, and attempted to urge them on, but they deserted their general, and fled. Being severely wounded, he was rescued, through the gallantry of his cavalry, and conveyed to Rome, whither the fugitives fled, fancying the French at their heels. "The Neapolitan officers," observes Nelson, "in detailing these circumstances, "have not lost much honour; for, God knows, they had not much to lose: but they lost all they had."

Dispirited by these inauspicious events, the King of Naples returned to his capital, on the 14th of December. A letter from Mack followed in a few days, representing that he had no means of arresting the progress of the French, and beseeching their majesties to quit Naples with all possible expedition. This advice it was resolved to follow; and preparations were instantly made for removing the whole royal family, with their jewels, the most valuable works of art, and their richest moveables, on board the Vanguard, to Palermo. This intention, however, it was necessary to keep a profound secret from the Neapolitans. It was not doubted that most of the nobility, who were disaffected, and of the common people, who were attached to the reigning family, would object for different reasons to the measure, and consequently concur in defeating it. The whole correspondence relative to this important business was carried on by the queen and Lady Hamilton, who, being in habits of constant intercourse with her majesty, was not liable to suspicion. At considerable personal risk, that daring woman, accompanied by the admiral, one night explored a subterranean passage leading from the palace to the sea-side. A bell that had been accidentally touched alarmed one of the sentries,

Preparations for removing the Royal Family from Naples.

and, but for the extraordinary presence of mind displayed by her ladyship, the scheme must have been frustrated. Neither the admiral nor the ambassador durst at this time appear at court, knowing that all their movements were watched, and that the disaffected had even conceived the idea of seizing them as a guarantee against the attack of Naples, in case the French should get possession of the city. It was amidst this important business that Nelson wrote this concise letter to Earl Spencer: — “There is an old saying that, ‘when things are at the worst, they must mend.’ Now, the mind of man cannot fancy things worse than they are here. But, thank God! my health is better; my mind never firmer; and my heart in the right trim, to comfort, relieve, and protect, those whom it is my duty to afford assistance to. Pray, my lord, assure our gracious sovereign that, whilst I live, I will support his glory; and, that if I fall, it shall be in a manner worthy of your lordship’s faithful and obliged, NELSON—I must not write more, every word may be a text for a long letter.”

Several successive nights were occupied in sending on board, by the subterraneous passage already mentioned, the most valuable effects of the royal family, to the amount, as Nelson estimated, of two millions and a half sterling. The Neapolitan ships, three sail of the line, and three frigates, were taken out of the mole. The seamen from two sail of the line in the Bay left their ships, and went on shore; and a party of English seamen and officers were sent from the Vanguard to assist in navigating them to a place of safety. These movements no doubt served to excite the suspicions of the mob, which assembled and became very riotous, insisting that the royal family should not leave the city. Several persons were killed, and the corpse of one, a king’s messenger

Nelson sails with the Royal Family for Sicily.

from Vienna, was dragged by the legs under the windows of the palace. At length, Prince Pignatelli having been appointed viceroy, a police guard established, and arms, together with large sums of money, liberally distributed among the lazzaroni, the admiral and Captain Hope, after dark on the 21st of December, landed with three barges at a corner of the arsenal, went to the palace, and brought out the whole royal family, who in an hour were safe on board the Vanguard.

The admiral, having passed the two following days in making arrangements for the safety of the British merchants, whose property had been already embarked, and of the French emigrants at Naples, and given directions to the Marquis de Niza to burn the Neapolitan ships, rather than suffer them to fall into the hands of the enemy, left the Bay, on the evening of the 23^d, with the Vanguard, two other English ships of war, and twenty sail of vessels. The next day a more violent storm came on than Nelson himself had ever experienced; and, on the 25th, their majesties' youngest child, Prince Albert, previously in good health, was suddenly taken ill, and expired the same evening in the arms of Lady Hamilton, who performed for the royal party all the offices of a servant; for on this trying occasion one man only belonging to the household rendered any assistance. On the morning of the 26th, the Vanguard anchored in the bay of Palermo, where their majesties and their family were landed, and received with loud acclamations. One of the king's first public measures, after his arrival at Palermo, was an order, dated on board the Vanguard, that all Frenchmen whatever should leave the island of Sicily; and an English transport was prepared for their conveyance to Trieste.

Towards the close of 1798, a circumstance occurred which gave the sensitive mind of Nelson

Appointment of Sir Sidney Smith in the Levant.

the greatest uneasiness. Though he had not yet fallen in with any of the fugitive ships from Aboukir, and, from the want of gun-boats and bomb-vessels, had been prevented from making any attempt to destroy the enemy's transports at Alexandria, yet, as we have seen, he had left Captain Hood to blockade that port, in order to intercept supplies, as well as the return of any of the French to Europe. He still cherished the idea that some of his "brave band of brothers" might be fortunate enough to consummate the object for which he had been appointed in the Mediterranean. It was not, therefore, without extreme mortification that he learned the arrival of Sir Sidney Smith, a gallant and enterprising officer, whom ministers had sent out to co-operate with his brother, the British minister at Constantinople, and our ally, the Turk, in the operations in the Levant. Sir Sidney, who had perhaps not duly considered his instructions, which in fact directed him to place himself under Nelson's orders, had intimated his intention of taking under his command Captain Hood and the squadron left with him off the Nile. Fired with indignation, the admiral thus expressed his feelings to the commander-in-chief:—"I do feel, for I am man, that it is impossible for me to serve in these seas with a squadron under a junior officer. Could I have thought it?—and from Earl Spencer! Never, never was I so astonished as your letter made me. As soon as I can get hold of Troubridge, I shall send him to Egypt, to endeavour to destroy the ships in Alexandria. If it can be done, Troubridge will do it. The Swedish knight [Sir Sidney Smith] writes Sir William Hamilton that he shall go to Egypt, and take Captain Hood and his squadron under his command. The knight forgets the respect due to his superior officer. He has no orders from you to take my ships away from my command: but it is all of a,

Nelson's Dissatisfaction.

piece. Is it to be borne? Pray, grant me your permission to retire, and I hope the Vanguard will be allowed to convey me and my friends to England." That his lordship at this time seriously designed to retire is manifest from his having solicited permission from Earl St. Vincent to leave the command to his gallant and most excellent second, Captain Troubridge, or some other of his officers—if his health and uneasiness of mind should not be mended. The latter was certainly mitigated, if not wholly removed, by a communication from Earl St. Vincent, who was as dissatisfied as Nelson himself with the arrangement which had so strongly excited the feelings of the latter. Sir Sidney, writing to the commander-in-chief, had said that he presumed, all the ships in the Levant being junior to himself, he had a right to take them under his command. This gave great offence; and "his lordship," says Nelson, in a letter to Captain Ball, "has in consequence given him a broad hint, and taken him handsomely down; and, to prevent any thing of the kind happening in future, he has ordered Sir Sidney to put himself immediately under my command." This point, however, once settled, all animosity gradually subsided; and no man was more ready than Nelson to bestow on Sir Sidney the meed of applause which his conspicuous services richly merited.

Early in January, 1799, the return to Constantinople of the envoy, who had brought the costly presents of the Grand Signor, afforded Nelson an opportunity of standing forward as the advocate of humanity. The *Bonne Citoyenne* sloop, to the command of which Nelson's son-in-law, Captain Nisbet, had been promoted, was appointed to convey the envoy and his suite to the Turkish capital. As he was passing in a boat near the Portuguese man-of-war, *Principe Real*, then lying in the Mole, to go on board the

Nelson sends Troubridge to Alexandria.

Bonne Citoyenne, several Turks and Moors on board that ship, where they were kept as slaves, called to him and claimed his protection. The envoy solicited the interference of Nelson, and his lordship immediately wrote to the Marquis de Niza — “ You have some Turkish slaves on board. I beg as a friend—as an English admiral—as a favour to me—as a favour to my country—that you will give me the slaves.” The Portuguese commander very handsomely gave up, without hesitation, all the slaves he had on board, to the number of twenty-five, and they were sent to the Turkish envoy, Kelim Effendi, who took them with him to Constantinople, blessing their noble benefactor.

On the 7th of the same month, the admiral despatched Troubridge, whom he had recalled from Leghorn, with the Culloden, Theseus, Bulldog, and victuallers, to Syracuse, to collect the bomb-vessels destined to make a vigorous attack on the French shipping in the harbour of Alexandria; and with directions to deliver up the blockade of the port to Sir Sidney Smith, on his arrival in that quarter. Captain Louis, in the Minotaur, was detached about the same time, to co-operate with Commodore Mitchell, of the Portuguese squadron, in the protection of Leghorn and the north coast of Italy.

Events were meanwhile rapidly producing the overthrow of the royal government in Naples. The French, after the rout of the Neapolitan army and its flight to Rome, kept advancing without opposition. Their general, Championnet, wrote to the Directory that, by means of a correspondence which he kept up with the disaffected party, he should be master of Naples by the time they received information of the reduction of Capua. As soon as they had got possession of the latter place, Prince Pignatelli, the new viceroy, concluded an armistice with the enemy, in

Events at Naples.

which the name of the king was wholly omitted. The lazzaroni, or rabble of the capital, who were attached to the royal interest, and mustered about fifty thousand men, suspecting this treachery, seized all the arms they could find, and paraded the streets, shouting *vivas* for the king and St. Januarius. Mack was considered as a traitor, and the relics of his army as Jacobins, whom French gold had corrupted. The general, deeming himself unsafe at Naples, fled to Championnet, who gave him a passport and escort to Milan, where he was, nevertheless, seized as a prisoner of war, by order of the Directory. The Neapolitan army, not less terrified than their commander at the threats of the lazzaroni, followed his example, joined the French, and in two days became quite disorganized and dispersed. Prince Moliterno, who had been chosen leader by the lazzaroni, soon rendered himself an object of their suspicion, by entering into negotiations with the French for delivering up the capital to their army: tumults, attended with plunder and massacre, were the consequence. At length, Moliterno and his adherents, seizing the forts which commanded the capital, summoned the French to their aid. They entered Naples on the 23^d of January, but not without a desperate and sanguinary resistance on the part of the lazzaroni, which was kept up even after the invaders, with their artillery, were in possession of the principal streets.

What Championnet could not accomplish by force he effected by stratagem. Professing profound veneration for St. Januarius, the tutelary saint of the lazzaroni, he placed a guard of honour at the church dedicated to him; adopted "Respect for St. Januarius" as the watchword of the army; and gravely invoked him to restore peace to the suffering city. The news of this apparently sincere devotion flew like lightning through the ranks of the infuriated mob,

Naples taken by the French.

and produced an instant reconciliation. Shouts of "Long live the French!" "Long live the Republic!" re-echoed through the lines. The miraculous liquefaction of the blood of the patron saint — a piece of mummery too well known to every reader to need describing here—took place the same evening at the intercession of the venerable archbishop and his pious clergy; and on the 25th was held a solemn *Te Deum*, at which all the people of Naples were invited to give thanks to the Most High for the glorious entry of the French. On the same day, Championnet proclaimed the destruction of the monarchical government, and the establishment, in its stead, of a republic, to be called the Parthenopean. Meanwhile, owing to the indecision and suspicious conduct of Pignatelli, Commodore Campbell, to whom the Marquis de Niza had transferred the command of the Portuguese squadron, thought it his duty to destroy, though perhaps somewhat prematurely, the Neapolitan ships of war, to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy.

The chief objects of Lord Nelson's attention were now the defence of Sicily from an expected invasion by the French, and the reduction of Malta. In addition to the militia of the former island, 26,000 in number, the king ordered four regiments of foot, one of horse, and a body of artillerymen, to be raised. Active preparations were also made, under the superintendence of the British admiral, for building and equipping gun-boats; 65 pieces of cannon, brought from Naples, were mounted on the batteries of Palermo; and, with that confidence in his brave men which rendered them equal to any emergency, he nobly offered, in case succours should not arrive, "to defend Messina with the ship's company of an English man of war."

Early in March, however, he had the satisfaction

Arrival of Troubridge and Hood from Egypt.

of seeing General Sir Charles Stuart arrive from Minorca at Palermo, with two regiments, which immediately marched to Messina. This circumstance not only relieved that important place from all apprehension of danger, but tended to inspire confidence throughout the island.

The state of Malta gave his lordship particular anxiety. An attempt to storm La Valette had failed, and the Maltese, who were investing the place, were near starving for want of corn and supplies of the first necessaries of life — a point which he urged in the strongest manner on the attention of the king and his minister, Acton, and not ineffectually, for money, arms, ammunition, and stores, were soon afterwards despatched to the island.

On the 17th of March, Captains Troubridge and Hood arrived at Palermo with the squadron from Egypt, where every endeavour to destroy the transports in the harbour of Alexandria had proved ineffectual.* The French had, after Nelson's departure,

* A circumstance which occurred during the blockade of Alexandria by this squadron seems to throw some light on the cause of that conflagration which robbed the British admiral of his grandest trophy. The Rev. Cooper Wyllyams, chaplain of the Swiftsure, in his "Voyage in the Mediterranean," gives the following account of it:—"Some French officers, during the blockade of Alexandria, were sent off to Captain Hallowell, to offer a supply of vegetables, and to observe, of course, the state of the blockading squadron. They were received with all possible civility. In the course of conversation, after dinner, one of them remarked that we had made use of unfair weapons during the action, by which probably L'Orient was burnt; and that General Bonaparte had expressed great indignation at it. In proof of this assertion, he stated that, in their late gun-boat attacks, the camp had been set on fire by balls of inextinguishable matter, which were fired from one of the English boats. Captain Hallowell instantly ordered the gunner to bring up some of those balls, and asked him whence he had them. To the confusion of the accusers, he related that they were found on board the Spartiate, one of the ships captured on the 1st of August. As these balls

Nelson opposes the return of any French from Egypt.

very strongly fortified all the points of the harbour ; and the transports could not be annoyed by shells, as all the mortars burst, and six fireships were lost in a gale of wind. This was not the only mortifying intelligence which reached the admiral on this occasion. He learned that it was Sir Sidney Smith's intention to give passports to any such French ships at Alexandria as might choose to return to France: "Now," says the indignant Nelson, writing the very next day to Sir Sidney, "as this is in direct opposition to my opinion, which is never to suffer one individual Frenchman to quit Egypt, I most strictly charge and command you never to give any French ship or man leave to quit Egypt." To Mr. Wyndham he observed on the same subject: "I consider it nothing short of madness to permit that band of thieves to return to Europe. No !—to Egypt they went with their own consent: and there they shall remain, whilst Nelson commands this detached squa-

were distinguished by particular marks, though in other respects alike, the captain ordered an experiment to be made, to ascertain the nature of them. The next morning," continues Mr. Wyllyams, "I accompanied Mr. Parr, the gunner, to the island. The first we tried proved to be a fire-ball, but of what materials composed we could not ascertain. As it did not explode, which at first we apprehended, we rolled it into the sea, where it continued to burn under water, a black, pitchy substance exuding from it, till only an iron skeleton of a shell remained. The whole had been carefully crusted over with a substance that gave it the appearance of a perfect shell. On setting fire to the fusee of the other, which was differently marked, it burst into many pieces: though somewhat alarmed, fortunately none of us were hurt. People account differently for the fire that happened on board the French admiral: but why may it not have arisen from some of these fire-balls left perhaps carelessly on the poop, or cabin, where it first broke out?—and what confirms my opinion on this head is that several pieces of such shells were found sticking in the Belle-ophon, which she most probably received from the first fire of L'Orient."

Operations in the Bay of Naples.

dron ; for never, never will he consent to the return of one ship or Frenchman."

Austria and Russia had now taken the field against France, which had seized the states of the king of Sardinia, the grand-duke of Tuscany, and the Pope. Pius VI. was forced from his capital, and hurried, in his 82^d year, to Valence, in France, where he died, after a captivity of six months, and his persecutors ordered unslaked lime to be thrown into the grave to consume his body. The strong fortress of Corfu surrendered to a combined Russian and Turkish force ; and the Russian admiral informed Lord Nelson that, after sailing along the coast of Calabria, to succour and encourage the inhabitants of that province, who had refused to submit to the French, he should proceed to Messina. With this prospect, his lordship arranged a plan for the reduction of the islands in the bay of Naples and the blockade of that city, and deputed Captain Troubridge in the *Culloden*, with the *Zealous*, *Minotaur*, *Swiftsure*, *Seahorse*, *El Corso* sloop, and *Perseus* bomb, to carry it into execution.

As soon as this force appeared off the islands of Procida, Ischia, and Capri, the inhabitants, frantic with joy, cut down the tree of liberty, destroyed the French colours, and hoisted those of their lawful sovereign. "I wish we had a few thousand good English troops," wrote Troubridge, in giving this information ; "I would have the king of Naples on his throne in forty-eight hours." At Ischia the tricoloured flag was torn into ten thousand pieces, so that he could not procure even a rag of it to lay at his majesty's feet : but he sent two pieces of the tree of liberty for the king's fire, with the names of the persons who brought them painted upon them. All the municipal officers appointed by the republicans were delivered up as prisoners and placed at the disposal of the king, who sent a judge from Palermo with

Proceedings of Prince Caraccioli.

an especial commission for the trial and punishment of the most guilty of them. It would almost appear from the sequel that the odium of the vengeance intended to be taken by the court on this occasion was designed to be thrown by it upon its English allies : but the penetration of Troubridge discovered and baffled this insidious scheme.

While on his station off Naples, he learned that Prince Caraccioli had been placed at the head of the marine of the new republic. This nobleman, a cadet of one of the most illustrious families in the kingdom, had been regularly bred to the naval profession, and was one of the twelve officers sent to serve as volunteers in the navies of Great Britain and France, during the American war, for the purpose of gaining experience. After his return to Europe, he had gradually risen from the command of a frigate to that of the Neapolitan squadron. Caraccioli had accompanied the king to Palermo, where his majesty conferred on him the supreme command of his few remaining ships. On his departure for Messina, when taking leave of the queen, she had most earnestly and pathetically conjured him to do every thing in his power to promote the welfare of her little family. Soon afterwards, upon pretext of assisting the royalists who had risen in Calabria, he abandoned the cause of his sovereign, and joined the republicans with the force committed to his charge. From letters of this officer's, intercepted by Troubridge, he learned that Caraccioli had sent for Salvatore Giudice, the chief of the fishermen at St. Lucia, and insisted on his procuring seamen for the gun-boats. Giudice assured him that it would be impossible to find one who would serve against his sovereign ; and the prince threatened him in return. The fishermen then declared that, if they should find him to be a Jacobin, though he had hitherto been a

Judicial Proceedings.

favourite with them, he should be one of the first to suffer — “for each of them,” says Troubridge, “has his marked Jacobin to stiletto.”

“The judge,” continues the captain, “appears to me to be the poorest creature I ever saw, and to be frightened out of his senses. He declares that seventy families are concerned, and talks of its being necessary to have a bishop to degrade the priests before he can execute them. I told him to hang them first, and, if he did not think that sufficient, to send them afterwards to me. I recommended him to punish the principal traitors the moment he had passed sentence. In conversation I found his instructions were to go through it in a summary manner, and *under me*. I told him the latter must be a mistake, as they were not British subjects. The odium, I find, is intended to be thrown on us. I will outmanœuvre him there, and push him hard, too. . . . He tells me the custom with his profession is to return home the moment they have condemned, and hinted at a man of war. I found also from his conversation that the priests must be sent to Palermo, to be disgraced by the king’s order, and then returned for execution to this place. An *English man of war* to perform all this! —at the same time making application to me for a hangman, which I positively refused. If none could be found here, I desired he would send for one from Palermo. I see their drift: they want to make us the principals, and to throw all the odium upon us. . . . The distress for bread in Ischia is so great that it would move even a Frenchman to pity. Cannot a subscription be opened? I beg to put down my name for twenty ducats; I cannot afford more, or I would give. I feed all I can from a large private stock I had, but that will not last long. No fault shall attach to us. Palermo is full of grain, as is the neighbourhood: the French, I fear, have more inter-

Cardinal Ruffo and his Army.

eat there than the king." In a subsequent letter, he mentions a sedition among the Swiss in the Neapolitan service, caused by the high price of meat, and the smallness of their pay. As, however, nothing more was proved than murmurs, he undertook to mitigate the sentence of death passed upon the mutineers. "The men were all drawn up in a square, formed by the troops and marines, with their eyes bound, and all the ceremony was gone through except firing; when I directed the pardon to be read. One of them was almost gone before it was finished."

Among other persons of note who had followed the king of Naples to Sicily, was Cardinal Ruffo. With a character equally questionable, both as a subject and a soldier, he had joined in the weak and suspicious conduct pursued by Pignatelli, until he perplexed and disgraced the cause which he pretended to support. Quitting Sicily with a few attendants, he landed on the opposite coast of the peninsula, and immediately joined a body of Calabrese, who were in arms against the French. They consisted chiefly of peasantry, and, being soon increased by a motley crew of galley-slaves, criminals from the different gaols, and Italian banditti, were divided under three chiefs, whose characters would have disgraced any cause. They nevertheless styled their force the Christian army; Nelson called their leader the Great Devil; and such was their enthusiasm that they routed all the detachments sent against them, and finally assisted in causing the French invaders to evacuate the capital.

At this time, Captain Hood, who was acting under Troubridge, had taken the town of Salerno, only 28 miles from Naples, and had encouraged a rising of the population of the coast from Sorrento to Castellamare against the republicans. These events so near the capital, together with the successes of the Aus-

Retreat of the French from Naples.

trians, who had now taken the field both on the Rhine and in Italy, induced Macdonald, who had succeeded Championnet in the command of the French army, to call in his outposts, and, leaving 500 men in the castle of St. Elmo, to retire on the 25th of April from Naples to Capua, taking with him his sick and an immense quantity of plunder.

During these operations, the health of Nelson himself had been very indifferent, and his anxiety on account of Malta, the people of which were in the utmost distress, had exceedingly depressed his spirits. "We, of this house," he writes to Earl St. Vincent, in communicating his friend Troubridge's success, "are all anxious to get home; yet, in the present moment, cannot move. Indeed we have been the mainspring, joined with you, that have kept and are keeping this so much out of repair machine from breaking to pieces." Again he says: "I have been eternally pressing for supplies, and represented that £100,000 given away in provisions just now might purchase a kingdom. In short, my desire to serve, as is my duty, faithfully, their Sicilian majesties has been such, that I am almost blind and worn out, and cannot in my present state hold out much longer."

Somewhat cheered by the success of his brave officers near Naples, and the prospect thus opened for the restoration of the king to his continental dominions, his lordship was making exertions for reinforcing them with troops, both infantry and cavalry, when a report reached him that the Brest squadron, having escaped the vigilance of Lord Bridport, under cover of a fog, had joined the Spaniards at Cadiz; that their combined fleet of 35 sail had entered the Mediterranean; and their object was to proceed to Toulon, in order to embark troops there, for the purpose of acting successively against Minorca, Naples, and Sicily. Nelson's anxiety, on

Nelson prepares to defend Sicily.

receiving this intelligence, was extreme. "What a state am I in!" says he in writing to Earl St. Vincent. "If I go, I risk and more than risk Sicily, and what is now safe on the Continent; for we know from experience that more depends on opinion than on acts themselves. As I stay, my heart is breaking; and to mend the matter I am seriously unwell." He immediately sent orders to Troubridge to join him with three sail of the line, and to Captain Ball, directing him, in case the Russian squadron were before Malta, to bring with him all the line-of-battle ships and the *Thalia* frigate. Meanwhile he prepared, with the *Vanguard*, the only ship then lying in the bay of Palermo, to defend his post to the last extremity. In a few days he was there joined by Troubridge, and he then wrote to the commander-in-chief that it was his determination to remain on the north side of the island of Maritimo, for the purpose of covering Palermo, "which," he says, "shall be defended to the last. Your lordship may depend that the squadron under my command shall never fall into the hands of the enemy; and, before we are destroyed, I have little doubt but the enemy will have their wings so completely clipped that they may be easily overtaken." At this moment, be it observed, his lordship's whole force consisted of only five British ships of the line, three Portuguese, a Neapolitan frigate, a cutter, and a fire-ship—to cope with the united navy of France and Spain.

It was during this fearful state of suspense that one of his brave band, Captain Hallowell of the *Swiftsure*, sent him a singular present. This was a coffin, every part of which, iron as well as wood, had been made from a piece of the mainmast of *L'Orient*, taken up by the *Swiftsure* after the battle of Aboukir: it was finished with as much elegance as the skill of her carpenter enabled him to bestow on it. This present

Singular Present made to him.

was carried on board the Vanguard with the following note, dated Swiftsure, May 23^d.—"My lord, I have taken the liberty of sending you a coffin, made from the mainmast of L'Orient; that, when you have finished your military career in this world, you may be buried in one of your trophies: but, that that period may be far distant is the earnest wish of your obedient and much obliged servant, BENJ. HALLOWELL." The astonishment that prevailed among the ship's company, when they had convinced themselves that it was actually a coffin which had thus been conveyed on board, is not to be described. "We are like to have hot work of it, indeed," exclaimed one of the old Agamemnons; "you see the admiral intends to fight till he is killed, and there he is to be buried!" His tone of mind at this moment corresponded but too well with the nature of Captain Hallowell's present, which he received with pleasure and prized so highly that he ordered it to be placed upright against the bulk-head of his cabin, behind the chair on which he sat at dinner; and though he was afterwards prevailed upon, by the intreaties of an old and favourite servant, to permit it to be carried below, yet he resolved that it should be carefully preserved for the purpose designed by the gallant and esteemed donor.

It has been asserted that at this very moment Nelson was weary of the world. He felt disappointed at the conduct of his step-son, Captain Nisbet, and dissatisfied with himself, on account of the influence which he had suffered the fascinating Lady Hamilton to acquire over him. In this mood he wrote to his old friend Davison:—"Believe me, my only wish is to sink with honour into the grave; and, when that shall please God, I shall meet death with a smile. Not that I am insensible to the honours and riches my king and country have heaped upon

Nelson's dissatisfaction with the world and himself.

me — so much more than any officer could deserve : yet I am ready to quit this world of trouble, and envy none but those of the estate six feet by two." His heart was in fact on shore. Writing to Lady Hamilton, he says :—" To tell you how dreary and uncomfortable the Vanguard appears, is only telling you what it is to go from the pleasantest society to a solitary cell, or from the dearest friends to no friends. I am now perfectly the great man — not a creature near me. From my heart I wish myself the little man again. You and good Sir William have spoiled me for any place but with you." The commander-in-chief seems to have been well aware that Nelson was not impenetrable to female fascination. In writing to Lady Hamilton, soon after Nelson's return from Egypt, he says :—" Ten thousand most grateful thanks are due to your ladyship, for restoring the health of our invaluable friend, Nelson, on whose life the fate of the remaining governments in Europe, whose system has not been deranged by these devils, depends. Pray do not let your fascinating Neapolitan dames approach too near him : for he is made of flesh and blood, and cannot resist their temptations." Little did Lord St. Vincent seem to suspect that he was addressing this caution to the very person from whom the most danger was to be apprehended.

A few days afterwards, Nelson, having received directions from the commander-in-chief to act as he thought best in the then situation of affairs, determined to carry his squadron to Palermo, and to complete their provisions to six months, that they might be in readiness to obey any future orders.

Earl St. Vincent, who, on account of ill health, was on the point of resigning the command in the Mediterranean to Lord Keith, deemed himself justified by the return of the Spanish fleet to port, in conse-

Success of Cardinal Ruffo.

quence of damage which it had received, in detaching Admiral Duckworth to Lord Nelson, with four sail of the line. On the arrival of this reinforcement, Nelson having received advice of his promotion to rear-admiral of the red, shifted his flag, on the 7th of June, from the Vanguard to the Foudroyant, of 80 guns. On the 17th he was joined by Captain Ball, with the Alexander and Goliath, so that he had now a force of fifteen sail of English two-deckers, and three Portuguese; and, by an arrangement with their Sicilian majesties, it was determined that he should proceed with reinforcements to the bay of Naples.

During the absence of Captain Troubridge, Cardinal Ruffo, with an army of 20,000 Calabrese and other loyal Neapolitans, aided by a few hundred Russian troops, had defeated the republicans, after the departure of the French army, and, in consequence of these successes, had actually gained possession of the whole capital, excepting the castles of Uovo, Nuovo, and St. Elmo. In all these operations the Cardinal had been powerfully supported by the small British squadron left on this station under Captain Foote, an officer of established character for ability and integrity. Ruffo, although he had received peremptory orders from the king not to treat with rebels, and more especially with traitors of high rank, whose ingratitude demanded exemplary punishment, thought fit to modify his instructions. The principal of the rebels had retired to the castles of Uovo and Nuovo; the cardinal entered into a negotiation for the surrender of those forts; a project of capitulation was signed by Ruffo, and the Russian commanding officer, to which Captain Foote, when desired, attached his name, alleging that he did so, though he disapproved of such a manner of treating, and would not be answerable for its consequences, because he

Capitulation of the Rebels.

considered the cardinal as the confidential agent of his Sicilian majesty.

It appears that Ruffo, departing from the tenor of the king's instructions, had adopted the notion that he ought not to drive the principal Jacobins at Naples to despair, but rather leave them the means of escape; and was, therefore, determined to act with what Troubridge called "the true Neapolitan shuffle," in order to save some traitors of rank and fortune who had taken refuge in the castles. This scheme, however, was frustrated by the arrival of Lord Nelson. On the 24th of June, about thirty-six hours after Captain Foote had acceded to the capitulation, his lordship entered the bay of Naples with 17 sail of the line, bringing 1700 troops, and the prince royal and Sir William and Lady Hamilton on board the Foudroyant. A flag of truce was flying on the castles and on board the Seahorse. The admiral, feeling that, through the cardinal's misrepresentations, Captain Foote had been led to sign a capitulation, which was contrary to the intentions of the king, immediately threw out the annulling signal, and, acting under the royal authority, declared the treaty to be invalid. "The rebels," to use his own words, "then surrendered to the mercy of their sovereign, without any capitulation, and marched out as prisoners of war." Having carried the principal of them on board the ships, Nelson ordered Troubridge to land with a detachment of troops and to cut down the "infamous tree of anarchy," which was burned before the palace. He then sent the same officer, with Captain Ball and thirteen hundred men from the ships, to assist part of Ruffo's force and his Russian auxiliaries in investing the castle of St. Elmo.

Among the Neapolitan rebels who had been forced to seek refuge in the castles was Prince Caraccioli.

Trial of Prince Caraccioli.

Before the negotiation for surrender, he had fled, and implored by letter the Duke of Calvirano to interpose his good offices with Cardinal Ruffo for protection. He admitted in this letter that he was bound to account for his actions to those who should be legally authorized by his Sicilian majesty; and expressed his hope that the few days during which he had been forced to obey the mandates of the French republic would not be suffered to outweigh the faithful services of forty years. He afterwards fled to the mountains; a reward was offered for his apprehension; and, on the morning of the 29th of June, he was brought, in the disguise of a peasant, alongside the Foudroyant, which was considered as the seat of the king's government. Nelson was deeply agitated: he felt that he had now a most painful duty to perform. He ordered Commodore Count Thurn, commander of his Sicilian majesty's frigate *La Minerva*, to assemble a court-martial of Neapolitan officers on board the Foudroyant. The trial lasted from ten o'clock till twelve the same day; the ward-room being open as usual to all who chose to enter. To such of the English officers as understood Italian, the proceedings seemed to be fairly and honourably conducted. Caraccioli was repeatedly asked such questions as would have afforded him opportunity to clear himself from the charges preferred against him. In his answers, he endeavoured to prove that he had been forced into the republican service, and been compelled for some time to perform the duty of a common soldier, till he was offered the command of the naval force of the Neapolitan republic, which necessity alone at length constrained him to accept. This necessity the prisoner frequently insisted upon; but it was not proved to the satisfaction either of the court or of the British officers who were present. On the other hand, it was clearly demonstrated that

Trial of Prince Caraccioli.

he had enjoyed many opportunities of escaping, and, when asked why he had not embraced them, no satisfactory reply was made. The court then particularly directed its attention to these two points: 1st, the prisoner's having been actively present on board the republican vessel that had attacked the royal frigate *La Minerva*, the gun-boats, and the English ships, in which some of his Britannic majesty's subjects had been killed and others wounded; 2^{dly}, his not endeavouring to escape previously to that attack, when it evidently appeared that he had opportunities to do so. The defence of the unfortunate nobleman was vague and unsupported by evidence. The court passed sentence of death upon him. At five o'clock he was removed from the *Foudroyant*, and hanged at the fore-yard arm of *La Minerva*. His body was afterwards carried out to a considerable distance, and sunk, by means of shot, in the Bay.

The conduct of Nelson, in refusing to ratify the capitulation of the castles and in bringing Caraccioli to trial, has been arraigned in the bitterest manner, and is even regarded by some as having thrown a deep stain upon his character. The inexorable determination which he displayed on these points has been ascribed to the influence which a revengful court had acquired over him, through the powerful fascinations of a most accomplished woman, by which he was certainly spell-bound for the remainder of his life. If this be true, all we can say is, Alas, poor human nature! thou strange compound of excellence and frailty, of divine elements and earthly passions! No more the champion of cruelty on the one hand than of treason on the other, the writer contents himself with giving the above plain statement of the facts connected with this subject derived from the most authentic record of the life of Nelson that exists.*

* Life of Admiral Lord Nelson by Clarke and M'Arthur.

Return of the King to Naples.

On the day preceding the trial of Caraccioli, Captain Foote had sailed in the Seahorse for Palermo, for the purpose of conveying the royal family to Naples. Their majesties, however, resolved to take their passage in their own frigate *La Sirena*, lest they might hurt the feelings of naval officers who had remained faithful to them; but signified their wishes that Captain Foote would embark their treasure and staff in his ship, and convoy themselves and transports with troops on board to their destination. They arrived in the Bay of Naples, on the 10th of July. The king immediately went on board the *Foudroyant*, and the royal standard was instantly hoisted. The inhabitants of Naples, on the first notice of this event, came out in prodigious numbers, rowing round the ship, and soliciting, in the most affectionate manner, a sight of their sovereign. "The effusions of loyalty," says Nelson, in writing to the new commander-in-chief, Lord Keith, "from the lower order of the people to their *father*, for by no other name do they address the king, are truly moving." These demonstrations of loyalty and attachment were daily repeated during the king's residence on board the *Foudroyant*, on the quarter-deck of which he held his levees, at the same hour as he had been accustomed to do in his palace.

It was about this time that the admiral received information of the grant of £10,000 voted to him by the East India Company. This gift afforded him an opportunity of exhibiting an additional proof of his generous and affectionate nature. He immediately appropriated one fourth of the sum to the use of his beloved relatives at home. "I never regarded money," says he in a letter to Lady Nelson, "nor wanted it for my own use: therefore, as the East India Company have made me so magnificent a present, I beg that £2000 of it may be disposed of in the fol-

Siege of the Castle of St. Elmo.

lowing manner: £500 to my father; £500 to be made up to Mr. Bolton, and let it be a God-send without any restriction; £500 to Maurice; and £500 to William. And if you think my sister Matcham would be gratified by it, do the same for her. If I were rich I would do more; but it will very soon be known how poor I am, except my yearly income."

The first object of the admiral's attention, on his return to Naples, was the reduction of the castle of St. Elmo. This task he allotted to Captain Troubridge, who for the first seven days was assisted by Captain Ball, till the latter was ordered to resume his post at Malta, for which island he accordingly sailed in the *Alexander*, accompanied by the *Success*, Captain Peard, and the Portuguese ship, *Alfonso*. The conduct of Troubridge throughout the siege of St. Elmo, as well as in the subsequent reduction of Capua and Gaeta, furnished incessant examples of the vigilance, enterprise, and inexhaustible resources of that great officer. Landing on the 27th of June, with the English and Portuguese marines of the squadron, he embarked the garrison of the castles of Uovo and Nuovo, composed of French and rebels, and left others in their stead under Captain Hood. On the 29th, he took post against Fort St. Elmo, which he summoned. The garrison consisted of 800 troops, under Mejan, commandant of the French Neapolitan army, a red-hot republican, whose rude manners and insolent behaviour were peculiarly obnoxious. Troubridge opened his batteries with such effect, one of them being within only 180 yards of the wall of the garrison, that, in spite of damp powder and bad cartridges, he soon caused the haughty republican to lower his tone. "I really am sorry," said he, writing to Nelson, "to see your lordship so low-spirited; all will go well: but the devilish fort is so high and commanding that our batteries are

Siege of the Castle of St. Elmo.

obliged to be mountains. When we get their works beat off, I hope we shall soon be able to mine the fort." And again ;—" The battery brought the vagabonds to their senses after much trouble and palaver." In eight days after the batteries were opened, the garrison, though well supplied with ammunition and provisions, surrendered themselves prisoners of war to the king of Naples and his allies. In his letter announcing this event to Lord Keith, Nelson did not fail to press upon his attention the conspicuous merits of his " brave friend, Troubridge," in this business ; and, adverting to the same subject, in a letter written some months afterwards to the Duke of Clarence, he says : " I find that General Köhler does not approve of such irregular proceedings as naval officers attacking and defending fortifications. *We* have but one idea — to get close alongside. None but a sailor would have placed a battery only 180 yards from the Castle of St. Elmo ; a soldier must have gone according to art and the *wavy* way : my brave Troubridge went straight, for we had no time to spare."

Nelson's low spirits, to which Troubridge adverts, were no doubt occasioned by the very delicate circumstances in which he was at this time placed. The arrival of the French and Spanish fleets, consisting of 65 sail, 43 of which were of the line, in the Mediterranean, excited strong apprehensions for the safety of Minorca. Lord Keith, before he sailed from Port Mahon, in pursuit of the enemy, sent instructions to Nelson either to come on himself or to send Admiral Duckworth to assist in the defence of that important island. In a subsequent letter, he said : " I trust the defence of Minorca to your lordship, and repeat my directions that the ships be sent for its protection." This was soon followed by a peremptory order to repair thither with the whole or the greater part of the force under his command. To Nelson the safety

Nelson disobeys the Orders of Lord Keith.

of the kingdom of Naples appeared an object of infinitely greater importance than the security of Minorca. He therefore resolved to disobey the order of Lord Keith, to whom he explained his reasons for not sending any part of the squadron, and then proceeded thus: "I am perfectly aware of the consequences of disobeying the orders of the commander-in-chief: but, as I believe the safety of the kingdom of Naples depends at the present moment on my detaining the squadron, I have no scruple in deciding that it is better to save the kingdom of Naples and risk Minorca, than to risk the kingdom of Naples and save Minorca. Your lordship will, I hope, approve of my decision."

His resolution once formed was not to be shaken by any consideration of personal danger or suffering. He judged it right, however, to be prepared for the worst, and immediately addressed a private letter on the subject to Earl Spencer, dated July 19. "More than ever," he says, "is my mind made up. At this moment, I will not part with a single ship; as I cannot do that without drawing 120 men from each ship now at the siege of Capua, where an army is gone this day. I am fully aware of the act I have committed; but, sensible of my loyal intentions, I am prepared for any fate which may await my disobedience. Capua and Gaeta will soon fall, and, the moment the scoundrels of French are out of this kingdom, I shall send eight or nine ships of the line to Minorca. I have done what I thought right—others may think differently." To the Board of Admiralty he wrote through the secretary:—"I feel the importance of my decision in every way, and know I must be subject to trial for my conduct: but I am so confident of the uprightness of my intentions for his majesty's service, and for that of his Sicilian majesty, which I consider as the same, that I, with

Reduction of Capua and Gaeta.

all submission, give myself to the judgment of my superiors." He had the deep mortification to learn that their judgment did not coincide with his: he was censured for not having obeyed the directions of the commander-in-chief in regard to Minorca, and also for having landed a body of 1000 seamen to assist in operations so far distant from the squadron as the siege of Capua.

The force, composed of Neapolitans, Swiss, Russians, Portuguese, and English seamen, marched, as we have seen, on the 19th of July against Capua. On the 25th the trenches were opened with one battery, 500 yards from the glacis. Here again Troubridge found the powder so bad that, as he wrote to Nelson, "the shells hardly breach; many fall short, though not above 300 toises. I really suspect some treachery." On the 27th, the French general sent out demanding protection for the *patriots* — which Troubridge declared to be inadmissible; and on the 28th he capitulated on the same terms as had been granted to St. Elmo. The garrison of Gaeta being under the same commanding officer as that of Capua, it was agreed that the former place should be surrendered without a siege, on which account all the French troops should be allowed to march out with their arms, and not be deemed prisoners of war on their arrival in France. Captain Louis, of the *Minotaur*, was accordingly sent to Gaeta, to receive possession of that fortress and to embark the garrison. The commandant, however, insisted on embarking horses and carrying away the plunder which he had collected. Nelson was appealed to. "The greatest care," said he, in his reply, "is to be taken that no property which they did not bring with them into the country is suffered to be carried away. As to horses, it is nonsense; as well might they say, 'We will carry a house.' If the fellow is a scoundrel, he must be thrashed." And

Nelson appoints Troubridge to command in the Bay of Naples.

again: "I was sorry that you had entered into any altercation with the scoundrel. There is no way of dealing with a Frenchman but to knock him down. To be civil to them is only to be laughed at when they are enemies."

In a private letter to Lord Spencer, which accompanied the admiral's despatches relative to these successes, dated the 18th of August, he says: "I certainly, from having only a left hand, cannot enter into the details which may explain the motives that actuate my conduct. My principle is — to assist in driving the French to the devil, and in restoring peace and happiness to mankind. I feel that I am fitter to do the action than to describe it: therefore, briefly, all the French being forced to quit this kingdom, and some order restored, two more ships of the line are to sail this evening for Minorca, which I shall take care of." A few days before, Nelson had despatched Admiral Duckworth to that island, with three sail of the line, and directions to take under his command such of his majesty's ships as he might find at Port Mahon.

The king of Naples, having appointed Cardinal Ruffo lieutenant-general of his continental dominions, determined to return to his family at Palermo, and embarked for that purpose, with his ministers, on board the *Foudroyant*. Nelson, deeming it necessary that the command of the squadron in the bay of Naples should be left with an officer above the rank of post-captain, resigned it to Troubridge, with an order that he should wear a commodore's pendant. Besides his own ship, the *Culloden*, he left him the *Goliath*, *Audacious*, and *Swiftsure*, with two Portuguese line of battle ships, and some smaller vessels; directing him to co-operate with Cardinal Ruffo, in all things necessary for the safety and quiet of the capital; and authorising him, in case he should find it expedient,

Nelson created Duke of Bronte.

to detach part of the squadron along the Roman coast, northward as far as Leghorn, to prevent the French from carrying off the plunder of Rome. The first thing which the king did on his arrival at Palermo was to express, by a truly princely remuneration, his sense of the important services which had been rendered by the British admiral. His majesty signified, through Lady Hamilton, his intention to confer on his lordship the dukedom and estate of Bronte, in Sicily; but such were Nelson's nice notions of honour that he absolutely declined the gift, protesting that he could not accept any reward from his Sicilian majesty for what he considered as merely the faithful discharge of his duty to his own sovereign. The king himself strove to conquer his scruples. "Lord Nelson," said he, "do you wish that your name alone should pass with glory to posterity, and that I, Ferdinand Bourbon, should appear ungrateful?" For two or three days, however, he persisted in his refusal; till Lady Hamilton, at the express instance of the queen, solicited him, even on her knees, to comply with the wishes of the royal donors, observing that, notwithstanding his too rigid notions of what was befitting his own honour, he ought to bear in mind what the world, as well as their majesties, must consider absolutely necessary for the preservation of their's. This argument, backed by the powerful influence of the fair pleader, triumphed. On the same day, the king sent his lordship a superb diamond-hilted sword, accompanied by a letter of thanks for his having reconquered his majesty's kingdom and replaced him on the throne of his ancestors. The value of this present, estimated at four thousand guineas, was greatly enhanced by the circumstance of its being the same sword which was given to the king by his father, Charles III., on leaving Naples to assume the crown of Spain.

Operations against the French in the Roman States.

On the 16th of August, Nelson sent his flag-ship, the *Foudroyant*, which he described as "the first two-decked ship afloat," to Cagliari, for the purpose of conveying back his Sardinian majesty to his continental dominions; and for a time he was obliged to hoist his flag on board a transport lying off Palermo.

The French, though expelled from the kingdom of Naples, were still in possession of the Papal states, from which they had collected a vast quantity of plunder and works of art, estimated by themselves to be worth eight millions sterling. These articles were lying ready packed up for embarking at Civita Vecchia. Troubridge, determined to disappoint the robbers of their prey, sent Captain Louis with part of his squadron to Civita Vecchia, with proposals to the commandant of the republican troops at that place. He offered the same terms that had been granted to Gaeta, representing that, if they were refused, the French would be certain to fall into the hands of the Russians, who were advancing, and in this case they might expect a journey to Siberia. Meanwhile, General Bouchard was advancing upon Rome from the south, with 2000 Neapolitan regulars and 7000 vagabonds. "The Romans," writes Troubridge, "have, it is said, all armed to resist him, declaring that the Neapolitans are such thieves, no reliance can be placed on their word. The Romans are determined, therefore, not to be under their yoke." On joining Captain Louis off Civita Vecchia, he learned that his letter had been delivered, but the commandant had deemed it expedient to forward it to General Garnier, at Rome. The commodore offered the Gaeta terms for the whole Roman state, excepting Ancona, being solicitous, if possible, to gain possession in the name of his Sicilian majesty, as the Austrians who were ready to offer any terms were fast approaching: "But," says Troubridge,

Expulsion of the French from the Roman States.

“I out-manceuvred them.” The French showed a disposition to prolong the negociation, a course which did not suit the views of the commodore. They invited him to a council, which consisted, he says, “of the damned ambassador and commissaire, who assumed a power over Garnier. The ambassador called the Roman territory the property of the French Republic, by right of conquest. I settled that by saying, ‘It’s mine by re-conquest,’ and he was silenced.” Next day he sent Louis up the Tiber to Rome, to assist Bouchard in securing the tranquillity of that city, and, carrying Garnier on board the *Culloden*, settled with him the terms of the evacuation, greatly to the disappointment of the Austrian general, Frölich, who, having advanced with a small force to within 24 miles of *Civita Vecchia*, fancied himself entitled to sign the capitulation. Captain Louis rowed up the Tiber in his barge, hoisted English colours on the Capitol, and acted for some time as governor of the city. The prediction of the Irish priest that Lord Nelson should take Rome by his ships was thus verified; and his lordship, amused with the whimsicality of the prophecy, and learning that Father M’Cormick had the character of a pious and faithful priest, requested the king of Sicily to give him some preferment in the church, which was immediately granted.

The reduction of Malta now became the object of Nelson’s chief solicitude. Lord St. Vincent had sailed, on the 31st of July, for England, whither Lord Keith, after his pursuit of the enemy’s fleet, had also proceeded, so that, from the middle of August to the end of November, Nelson considered himself as commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean: “therefore,” said he, “I must now watch from Cape St. Vincent to Constantinople.” No sooner was he informed of Troubridge’s successful termination of the campaign,

Operations against Malta.

in the Roman state, than he wrote to him that he should want all his line of battle ships, as he intended to go almost immediately to Minorca, to arrange a proper naval defence for that island, and to try to get troops to finish the business of Malta, which the French were preparing to relieve. These supplies were embarking at Toulon, and Nelson had already sent instructions to the Marquis de Niza to watch for and intercept them. At this juncture, a letter from the Portuguese minister ordered the marquis to return home with his squadron, as it was no longer necessary in the Mediterranean. Nelson insisted on the necessity of disregarding this order, which arose from ignorance of the real situation of affairs; "for," said he, "your services never were more wanted than at this moment, when every exertion is wanting to get more troops of English and Russians to Malta. I must, therefore, most positively desire that your excellency will not, on any consideration, withdraw one man from the shore, or detach any ship down the Mediterranean."

A report having now reached him that thirteen French and Spanish sail of the line had been seen off the coast of Portugal, he immediately wrote to hasten Troubridge. "If," said he, "I can but get a force to fight those fellows, it shall be done quickly," and he concluded with desiring him to get to Mahon as speedily as possible that they might there join. Having arrived off Mahon on the 12th of October, and left directions for Troubridge to follow him to Gibraltar, he again sailed; but had not proceeded far before he fell in with the Bulldog, from which he learned that Admiral Duckworth, at Gibraltar, gave little or no credit to the report of the ships seen off the Portuguese coast; and Sir Edward Berry, from Lisbon, having also assured his lordship that the rumour was disbelieved there, he returned with the

Nelson's application on behalf of his eldest brother.

squadron to Minorca. He found that island in such a state of security as to bid defiance to any force that Spain could send against it: and, had not General Fox been hourly expected, Sir James Erskine St. Clair, who then held the chief command there, would have accompanied his lordship with 1500 troops for the attack of Malta. Writing to Lord Spencer, he informs him that, Sir Edward Berry having rejoined the Foundroyant, he had placed Captain Hardy in the Princess Charlotte, which, having mustered a few men, he intended to take to sea with him. "My friend Hardy," says his lordship, "will make a man of war of her very soon." This letter is remarkable for a request which he prefers to the first lord of the Admiralty, in behalf of his eldest brother Maurice. "I have," he says, "given my brother, belonging to the Navy Office, a strong letter of recommendation to your lordship, that he may be appointed a commissioner of the navy. I mention this circumstance that you may be aware such a letter is coming, and prepared, I most earnestly hope, to meet my wishes."*

No sooner had his lordship reached Palermo, on the 23^d of October, than his mind was again a prey to the most racking anxieties respecting Malta. A fresh order had arrived for recalling the Portuguese squadron, and Captain Ball could with difficulty keep

* Lord Nelson's wishes on this point were not complied with, and his brother died in 1801, about four months after he had been advanced to be one of the chief clerks in the Navy Office. A rare instance of disinterestedness exhibited by this gentleman claims remembrance. While the entail of his brother's honours was under the consideration of government, Maurice, in writing to Lady Nelson, declared that his younger brother William should have the preference to himself. "It will be my wish and request to the admiral," he added, "not to put my name in the patent. I move in too humble a sphere to think of such a thing."

Nelson's anxiety about Malta.

the starving islanders from joining the French. On the 26th he addressed an urgent epistle on this subject to the commander at Minorca. "I am in desperation," says he, "about Malta. We shall lose it, I am afraid, past redemption. If Ball can hardly keep the inhabitants in hopes of relief by the five hundred men, landed from our ships, what must be expected when four hundred of them and four sail of the line will be withdrawn? And, if the islanders are forced again to join the French, we may not find even landing a very easy task; much less to get again our present advantageous position. I therefore intreat, for the honour of our king, and for the advantage of the common cause, that, whether General Fox is arrived or not, at least the garrison of Messina may be ordered to hold post in Malta, till a sufficient force can be collected to attack it, which, I flatter myself, will in time be got together. But, while that is effecting, I fear our being obliged to quit the island. I know well enough what officers in your situation can do. The delicacy of your feelings on the near approach of General Fox I can readily conceive; but the time you know nothing about. This is a great and important moment, and the only thing to be considered—Is his majesty's service to stand still for an instant?" The mortifying reply to this representation informed his lordship that the 28th regiment was ordered to England, and that Sir James was sure General Fox, who was hourly expected at Minorca, would not break his orders on any consideration, or for any object whatever.

To Earl Spencer he thus expressed himself respecting this refusal of troops from Minorca: "Much as I approve of strict obedience to orders—even to a court-martial, to inquire whether the object justified the measure—yet, to say that an officer is never, for any object, to alter his orders, is what I cannot com-

Nelson's Sentiments concerning Obedience to Orders.

prehend. The circumstances of this war so often vary, that an officer has almost every moment to consider—What would my superiors direct, did they know what is passing under my nose? The great object of the war is—Down, down with the French! To accomplish this, every nerve, and by both services, ought to be strained. My heart is, I assure you, almost broke with that and other things. . . . If the enemy get supplies in, we may bid adieu to Malta. This would complete my misery—for I am afraid I take all services too much to heart. The accomplishing of them is my study night and day.” In the same strain he wrote to the Duke of Clarence: “All my anxiety,” he says, “is at present taken up with the desire of possessing Malta. But I fear, notwithstanding all my exertions, that I shall not get any British troops from Minorca; without which the business will be prolonged, perhaps till it is relieved, when all the force which we could collect would be of little use against the strongest place in Europe. . . . I cannot comprehend how a moment can be lost in deciding: but, I find, few think as I do. To obey orders is all perfection. To serve my king and to destroy the French I consider as the great order of all, from which little ones spring, and if one of these little ones militates against it—for who can tell exactly at a distance?—I go back to obey the great order and object, to down, down with the damned French villains! Excuse my warmth, but my blood boils at the name of a Frenchman. I hate them all, royalists and republicans.”

With these sentiments, it may well be conceived that the news of the escape of Bonaparte from Egypt and his safe arrival at Frejus, on the south coast of France, was to Nelson a fresh source of vexation. He had always insisted that not a single individual of the invading army should be permitted to quit

Nelson's Antipathy to the French.

Egypt. "I own myself wicked enough," said he, "to wish them all to die in that country they chose to invade. We have scoundrels of French enough in Europe, without them." And in another letter he observes: "I cannot bring myself to believe they would entirely quit Egypt; and, if they would, I never would consent to one of them returning to the Continent of Europe during the war. I wish them to perish in Egypt, and give a great lesson to the world of the justice of the Almighty." Their conduct, indeed, in that country, had not tended to mitigate the natural antipathy which he felt against every thing French. After the battle of Aboukir, when he had sent all his prisoners ashore, upon a solemn engagement that they should not serve again until regularly exchanged, in spite of this contract, part of them were immediately distributed among different regiments, and the rest formed into what was called the nautic legion.

A few days after his return to Palermo, Nelson wrote to Troubridge, whom he supposed to be still at Minorca, to join him, and to bring the Northumberland with him. At the same time he detached the Foudroyant and Minotaur to Malta, to join the Marquis de Niza, whom he again desired, on his own responsibility, not to withdraw a man belonging to his squadron from the island, even though the Russians should have arrived. Meanwhile he exerted himself to procure for the distressed Maltese those supplies which they so much needed. He kept up an almost daily correspondence with Captain Ball, "I have begged," he says, "almost on my knees, for money, for the present subsistence of the Maltese, who bear arms." A day or two afterwards he writes: "The court have all the inclination; but to my knowledge they have not cash enough for the common purposes of government." In a third letter he

Nelson's extensive official Correspondence.

says: "The king has sent 4000 ounces to assist the poor islanders who bear arms." He afterwards explained that this sum was the collected pocket-money of the king's children, taken from them with the intention of being repaid out of an expected subsidy from England.

Ever since the victory of the Nile, unpleasant events seemed to crowd upon him by whom it had been achieved. That quality in which he surpassed perhaps every other commander, either by sea or land, that of keeping up a punctual and widely extended correspondence, was not sufficient to preserve him from censure on that very score. Writing to Admiral Duckworth on the 27th November, he says that he has received a severe set-down from the Admiralty for not having written by the Charon, though he wrote both by a courier and a cutter on the same day. "But," he adds, "I see clearly that they wish to show I am unfit for the command. I will readily acknowledge it; and therefore they need have no scruples about sending out a commander-in-chief. But where the object of the actor is only to serve faithfully, I feel superior to the smiles or frowns of any board. . . . I am nearly blind; but things go so contrary to my mind out of our profession, that truly I care not how soon I am off the stage." On the same day he transmitted a justification of himself to the secretary of the Admiralty, in which he observes: "As a junior flag-officer, of course without those about me—secretaries, interpreters, &c.—I have been thrown into a more extensive correspondence than ever, perhaps, fell to the lot of any admiral, and into a political situation, I own, out of my sphere. It is a fact which it would not become me to boast of but on the present occasion: I have never but three times put my feet on the ground since December, 1798; and that, except to the court, till

Expedition for the Reduction of Malta.

after eight o'clock at night, I never relax from business."

Commodore Troubridge arrived at Messina on the 26th of November, for the purpose of assisting in the reduction of Malta; and General Fox, who had by this time reached Minorca, sent permission to brigadier-general Graham, to proceed with the British troops at Messina on the same service, but ordered him not to incur any expence except for provisions. The feelings of Troubridge and Nelson were precisely similar on this occasion. "What can this mean?" says the latter, writing to Lord Spencer. "But I have told Troubridge that the cause cannot stand still for want of a little money. This would be what we call penny-wise and pound-foolish. If nobody will pay it, I shall sell Bronte and the emperor of Russia's box; for I feel myself above every consideration but that of serving faithfully." Then, adverting to the recent censure of the Board, he pathetically concludes: "Do not, my dear lord, let the Admiralty write harshly to me: my generous soul cannot bear it, being conscious it is entirely unmerited." Troubridge, finding that the intended reinforcement was delayed for want of money, immediately offered a considerable sum of his own to assist the general. "I promised him," said the commodore, in reporting to Lord Nelson, "fifteen thousand of my cobs: every farthing and every atom of me shall be devoted to the cause. General Graham seems the man for service; things will go well; I shall now sleep easy." Nelson himself actually pledged the estate of Bronte for twelve thousand ounces — £6,600—lest any difficulty should arise in the payment of the expences incurred by the troops.

The long delayed expedition at length proceeded to its destination; but Troubridge lamented the absence of the admiral, who lingered behind at Paler-

Troubridge's Remonstrance.

mo. Ever since his return from Egypt, he had become unconsciously more and more entangled in the snares that were spread for him, and more and more blinded to the intrigues and accustomed to the dissipations of the vicious court by which he was surrounded. Troubridge perceived the infatuation of his noble friend with extreme chagrin. While he was stationed in the bay of Naples, he had ventured to remonstrate against it with the natural bluntness of a British sailor. "I dread, my lord," said he, "all the feasting, &c. at Palermo. I am sure your health will be hurt. If so, all their saints will be damned by the navy. The king would be better employed digesting a good government. Every thing gives way to their pleasures. The money spent at Palermo gives discontent here. Fifty thousand people are unemployed, trade discouraged, manufactures at a stand. It is the interest of many here to keep the king away. They all dread reform. Their villainies are so deeply rooted that, if some method is not taken to dig them out, this government cannot hold together. Out of twenty millions of ducats collected as the revenue, only thirteen millions reach the treasury, and the king pays four ducats where he should only pay one. He is surrounded by thieves; and none of them have honour or honesty enough to tell him the real and true state of things." In another letter he drew this strong picture of the wretched state of Naples:—"There are upwards of forty thousand families who have relations confined. If some act of oblivion is not passed, there will be no end of persecution, for the people of this country have no idea of any thing but revenge, and to gain a point would swear ten thousand false oaths. Constant efforts are made to get a man taken up, in order to rob him. The confiscated property does not reach the king's treasury — all thieves! It is selling for

Distress in Malta.

nothing. His own people whom he employs are buying it up, and the vagabonds pocket the whole. I should not be surprised to hear that they brought a bill of expences against him for the sale."

The scenes of distress which this frank and open-hearted officer beheld around him on his arrival at Malta made him more keenly regret the inactivity of his commander. "Pardon me, my lord," said he, "it is my sincere esteem for you that makes me mention it. I know you can have no pleasure sitting up all night at cards: why then sacrifice your health, comfort, purse, ease, every thing, to the customs of a country where your stay cannot be long? . . . Your lordship is a stranger to half that happens, or the talk it occasions. If you knew what your friends feel for you, I am sure you would cut all the nocturnal parties: the gambling of the people of Palermo is talked of every where. I beseech your lordship, leave off. I really feel for the country. How can things go on? . . . I see that the poor inhabitants of Malta are to be sacrificed. If the supplies are stopped, I cannot leave my soldiers to be starved, though I shall have the painful task of abandoning the inhabitants to their fate. I beseech your lordship, press for a yes or no. If they say we shall not or cannot be supplied, I see nothing for it but to retreat as fast as possible." To the demand for provisions Nelson replied: "I cannot get the frigate out of the mole; therefore I must learn to be a hard-hearted wretch, for I fancy the cries of hunger in my ears. I send you orders for the different governors; you will see they are for the supply of the army and navy: therefore, whatever Graham and you send for will, if possible, be granted." A few days afterwards, he wrote to Lord Keith, who had returned to the Mediterranean and signified his intention of coming to Sicily. "Vessels," said he, "are here loading

Distress in Malta.

with corn for Malta ; but I can get neither the Neapolitan men-of-war nor merchant vessels to move. If I cannot get to Malta very soon, I shall remain here to give you a meeting and receive your orders. I have been trying with Sir W. Hamilton, in which the queen joins, to induce the king to return to Naples, but hitherto without effect." In writing about the same time to General Graham, he mentioned his intention of soon visiting Malta, adding, " It is certain you cannot go on without money ; therefore I declare, sooner than you should want, I would sell Bronte."

Meanwhile the distresses of the Maltese became so severe, that Troubridge declared they would move even a Neapolitan. The exportation of corn from Sicily being prohibited by the government, he strove once more to rouse the admiral to a sense of his own situation and that of the unfortunate islanders. " We are dying off fast for want," said he. " I learn by letters from Messina that Sir W. Hamilton says, Prince Luzzi refused corn some time ago, and Sir William does not think it worth while making another application. If that be the case, I wish he commanded at this distressing scene instead of me. Puglia had an immense harvest : near thirty sail left Messina before I did to load corn ; will they let us have any ? If not, a short time will decide the business. I wish I was at your lordship's elbow for an hour : *all, all* will be thrown on you. I will parry the blow as much as is in my power. I foresee much mischief brewing. God bless your lordship ! I am miserable, I cannot assist your operations more. Many happy returns of this day [new year's day] to you ; I never spent so miserable a one." A few days afterwards he wrote : " I have this day saved 30,000 people from dying, but with this day my ability ceases. As the government are bent on

Distress in Malta.

starving us, I see no alternative but to leave these poor unhappy people to perish, without our being witnesses of their distress. I curse the day I ever served the Neapolitan government. . . . We have characters, my lord, to lose—these people have none. Do not suffer their infamous conduct to fall on us. Our country is just, but severe. Such is the fever of my brain this minute, that I assure you, on my honour, if the Palermo traitors were here, I would shoot them first and then myself. Girgenti is full of corn: the money is ready to pay for it; we do not ask it as a gift. Oh! could you see the horrid distress I daily experience, something would be done. Some engine is at work against us at Naples; and I believe I hit on the proper person. If you complain, he will be immediately promoted, agreeably to the Neapolitan custom. All I write to you is known at the queen's. . . . For my own part, I look upon the Neapolitans as the worst of intriguing enemies. Every hour shows me their infamy and duplicity. I pray your lordship be cautious: your honest open manner of acting will be made a handle of. When I see you and tell you of their infamous tricks, you will be as much surprised as I am. The whole will fall on you."

Fortunate was it, for the success of the object which Nelson had so much at heart, that some of his officers possessed more energy than he was himself capable of exerting in this predicament. Captain Ball, having received accurate information that a number of ships laden with corn were lying in the port of Girgenti, sent his first lieutenant with orders to seize and bring them to Malta. These orders were duly executed, to the satisfaction of the owners, who received immediate payment for their corn. Complaints were made by the Sicilian government to the English ambassador and communicated to Nelson,

Nelson sails to Leghorn to meet Lord Keith.

who vindicated the act as one of the most imperative necessity, since, but for this anticipation of the king's orders to carry those supplies to Malta, that island must have been abandoned to the French. He added that he hoped the Sicilian government would never again force any servant of his Britannic majesty's to resort to so unpleasant an alternative; and there the matter ended.

It seemed as if Malta had been destined to furnish incessant cause of mortification to the harassed mind of Nelson. On Troubridge's arrival there, the Marquis de Niza had returned to Portugal with his squadron, in obedience to repeated orders; and now the Russian admiral, who had been so long expected from Naples, arrived at last at Messina, on his way, as it was supposed, to Malta; but he sent Nelson word that he could not go to that island, as he was bound to Corfu. Disappointed of this succour, he ordered the Foudroyant to be sent to Palermo; and on the 16th of January, 1800, sailed for Leghorn, to concert future operations with Lord Keith, who was engaged in stationing a squadron for the blockade of Genoa and the north coast of Italy. On the 23^d he wrote from Leghorn to Earl Spencer that Lord Keith was going with him to Palermo and Malta. This intention, however, was not fulfilled as far as related to Lord Keith. "If," said he, in the same letter, "Sir James St. Clair or General Fox had felt themselves authorised to have given us 2000 troops, I think that Malta by this time would have fallen, and our poor ships been released from the hardest service I have ever seen. The going away of the Russians has almost done me up; but the king of Naples has ordered 2600 troops from Sicily to assist Graham, and they are to be under our command. It is true they are not good soldiers; but they will ease our's in the fatigues of duty. The feeding the inhabitants

Capture of *Le Genereux*.

of Malta, and paying 2000 of the people who bear arms, has been a continual source of uneasiness to my mind. . . . I am in debt from my situation ; but time and care will get me out of it. Since May, 1798, I have had all the expences of a commander-in-chief, without even the smallest advantage."

On the 26th of January, the admiral left Leghorn, and, touching at Palermo on his way, proceeded on his voyage to Malta, in company with the *Alexander*, *Audacious*, *Success* frigate, and *El Corso* brig. On the 10th of February his squadron fell in with *Le Genereux*, 74, bearing the flag of rear-admiral Perrée, who, with three frigates and a corvette, had on board troops and stores destined for the supply of Malta. Their object was frustrated by the capture of *Le Genereux*. This was a circumstance peculiarly grateful to his mind, and he wrote to Palermo, jocosely desiring Prince Leopold to tell his august father that he believed he was the first duke of Bronte who ever took a French 74. The French prisoners he despatched in the *Audacious*, with directions to Captain Gould to land them at Malta, in order that they might assist in consuming the provisions of the garrison, and thus accelerate the surrender of the fortress : and, having found a number of Moorish prisoners, natives of Tripoli, he sent them to their own country, with a letter to the Bey, assuring him that he felt sincere pleasure in the opportunity of liberating so many of his subjects from a French prison.

Whilst off Malta, Nelson found his health so much affected, that he wrote to Lord Keith, informing him that he could not possibly remain there much longer. "Without some rest," says he, "I am gone." Learning however that the French ships in the harbour were ready for sea, and would probably attempt to escape with the first fair wind, he wrote a few

Precarious State of Nelson's Health.

days afterwards : " My state of health is very precarious. Two days ago I dropped with a pain in my heart, and I am always in a fever ; but the hopes of these gentry coming out shall support me a few days longer. I really desire to see this Malta business finished. . . . The intended movements of their ships is a convincing proof to me that the garrison has lost all hope of a successful resistance, and I wish General Graham would make false attacks. I am no soldier, therefore ought not to hazard an opinion ; but, if I commanded, I would torment the scoundrels night and day." Having waited till the 8th of March, in the vain expectation that the enemy would come out, he was then compelled by his continued ill health to sail for Palermo, where he did not arrive till the 16th. On the 20th he wrote to Lord Keith : " It is too soon to form any judgment of what effect it may have on my health : but on the 18th I had near died with the swelling of some of the vessels of the heart. I know, the anxiety of my mind on coming back to Syracuse in 1798 was the first cause ; and more people, perhaps, die of broken hearts than we are aware of." To Troubridge, who had himself been lately indisposed, his lordship wrote in the same strain :— " It is too soon to form an opinion whether I can ever be cured of my complaint. At present I see but glimmering hopes, and probably my career of service is at an end, unless the French fleet should come into the Mediterranean, when nothing shall prevent my dying at my post. I hope, my dear friend, that your complaints are better. Pray do not fret at any thing : I wish I never had : but my return to Syracuse in 1798 broke my heart, which, on any extraordinary anxiety, now shows itself, be that feeling pain or pleasure."

If Nelson's health was not improved, his spirits were not a little cheered by an event that happened

Capture of the Guillaume Tell

immediately afterwards. The Foudroyant, after landing his lordship at Palermo, returned, under the command of Sir Edward Berry, to her station off Malta. In the night after her arrival, the Guillaume Tell, the only line-of-battle ship belonging to the French squadron at Aboukir which had not fallen into Nelson's hands, started from the harbour. In a house close to the enemy's works Troubridge had placed a lieutenant and three trusty men, as a nightly watch upon the ships. Their signals instantly apprized the British squadron of the motions of the Guillaume Tell. She was instantly chased by the Foudroyant, the Lion, 64, Captain Dixon, and the Penelope frigate, Captain Blackwood, but did not surrender till after a most obstinate resistance of three hours. She carried 86 guns and 1220 men, 400 of whom were killed and wounded, and bore the flag of rear-admiral Decrès. Sir Edward Berry, who commanded the Foudroyant, wrote the same day, March 30, to acquaint his lordship with the gratifying event. "Had you been a partaker with me of the glory," he thus commences his most interesting narrative of the action, "every wish would have been gratified. How very often I went into your cabin last night, to ask you if I were doing right; for I had nothing to act upon!" Troubridge, also, in congratulating Nelson on the capture of this "thirteenth and last of the line-of-battle ships of the famous Egyptian squadron," says, "I would have given one thousand guineas your health had permitted your being in the Foudroyant." Nelson himself, however, thanked God that he was not present; "for," said he, "it would finish me, could I have taken a sprig of these brave men's laurels. They are, and I glory in them, my darling children, served in my school; and all of us caught our professional zeal and fire from the great and good Earl of St. Vincent." The

Generous Sentiments of Nelson.

same sentiment he repeated in a letter to Earl Spencer. "My friends wished me to be present. I have no such wish; for a something might have been given me which now cannot. Not for all the world would I rob any man of a sprig of laurel, much less my children of the Foudroyant. I love her as a fond father a darling child, and glory in her deeds. I am vain enough to feel the effects of my school." To the secretary of the Admiralty he writes: "Thus, owing to my brave friends is the entire destruction of the French Mediterranean fleet to be attributed, and my orders from the great Earl of St. Vincent are fulfilled. . . . My task is done; my health is finished; and probably my retreat for ever fixed—unless another French fleet should be placed for me to look after."

A few days afterwards, Sir William Hamilton was superseded in his post by the Honourable Arthur Paget. Towards Lord Keith Nelson himself had never felt any cordiality. "We of the Nile," he observed to Troubridge, "are not equal to Lord Keith in his estimation, and ought to think it an honour to serve under such a *clever* man." Resolving not to begin with new men and new measures, his lordship solicited permission to return to England, "when," says he, writing to Earl Spencer, "you will see a broken-hearted man. My spirit cannot submit patiently. My complaint, which is principally a swelling of the heart, is at times alarming to my friends, but," he adds, not to himself. Before his return, however, he sailed once more for Malta, where he was received with enthusiastic joy. The flag of the Guillaume Tell was presented to him, with an affectionate address by the gallant captors; and the illuminations which took place when his lordship visited Captain Ball, who had been appointed governor of the island, at his villa at St. Antonia, alarmed the French garrison, who could not guess the cause, to

Nelson's Sentiments in regard to Prize-money.

such a degree that they attempted to make a *sortie*. but were instantly repulsed.

At Malta, Nelson learned by letters from England that, immediately after the return of Lord St. Vincent, he had been challenged by Sir John Orde, because the latter, as the senior officer, had not been appointed to the command of the squadron, with which Nelson had achieved the splendid victory of the Nile; but that a duel had been prevented by the interposition of the law and the still more powerful effect of a positive injunction from the king. With deep chagrin and indignation, he learned also that the earl had preferred a claim to prize-money as commander-in-chief, after he had quitted the station. Nelson, who always felt warmly, and the more so perhaps on this occasion in consequence of the difference of his sentiments in regard to money, vehemently protested against the admission of this claim, which was afterwards litigated and decided against the earl. Dr. Lawrence had given an opinion against the right of junior flag-officers to prize-money. "Notwithstanding Dr. Lawrence's opinion," said Nelson, to his agent, "I do not believe I have any right to exclude junior flag-officers, and, if I have, desire that no such claim may be made — no, not if it were sixty times the sum, and, poor as I am, I were never to see prize-money."

At Malta, his lordship remained about a month, concerting arrangements for the speedy reduction of that island. Though convinced that it must soon fall, yet he had no wish to be present at its actual surrender, lest his friend, Ball, should lose the chief honour of that important conquest. He returned, therefore, to Palermo at the latter end of May, and immediately made preparations for his departure for England, in company with his friends, Sir William and Lady Hamilton. The queen of Naples also de-

Nelson sets out for England.

terminated to take this opportunity to visit her daughter, the Empress of Austria, and her other relatives at Vienna. During the few days that he passed at Palermo, his lordship availed himself of his influence with the king to solicit certain concessions for the benefit of the vassals on his domain of Bronte; whose general and individual prosperity he was solicitous to promote by all the means in his power. "My object," he says, "at Bronte is to make the people happy, by not suffering them to be oppressed, and to enrich the country by the improvements of agriculture." With these views, he selected as governor a Mr. Graffer, a man of unimpeachable integrity and extraordinary skill in agriculture. His majesty complied with all his wishes respecting Bronte, and conferred on him at the same time the order of St. Ferdinand, the members of which have the especial privilege of being covered in the royal presence.

On the 8th of June, the queen, with Prince Leopold and three princesses, Sir William and Lady Hamilton, Prince Castelcicala, who was going on a special mission to England, and a numerous train of royal attendants, were embarked on board the *Foudroyant* and *Alexander*, which immediately sailed for Leghorn. The royal party proceeded by way of Florence to Ancona, whence they were conveyed in two Russian frigates to Trieste. Nelson was every where received with the strongest demonstrations of public respect and individual affection. At Vienna, Prince Esterhazy invited his lordship and his friends to his mansion at Eisenstadt, in Hungary, where he entertained them four days in a style of royal magnificence, a hundred grenadiers six feet high constantly waiting at table. From the Austrian capital, where they left the queen of Naples, they travelled to Prague, for the purpose of visiting, at his particular request, the Archduke Charles, who was prevented by illness

Nelson's Reception in Germany.

from paying his respects to our naval hero at Vienna, as he had intended. After their first interview, "This," said Nelson, to his friends, "is a man after my own heart." At Dresden, where the party remained eight days, two vessels were fitted up for their conveyance down the Elbe to Hamburg. At every place where they touched, the shore was lined with crowds of people, so anxious to gain a sight of the hero of the Nile, that in some places many of them waited two or three days and nights for the purpose. At Magdeburg, where they landed, such was the public curiosity, that the master of the hotel at which the party stopped collected a considerable sum of money by allowing persons to mount a ladder, which enabled them to peep at the travellers through a small window. At Hamburg his lordship one morning perceived a venerable clergyman, between seventy and eighty years of age, looking earnestly towards the door of the house in which he resided. He immediately sent to inquire his wish, and learned that the stranger had travelled forty miles, bringing with him the parish bible, in hopes that the hero would gratify him by writing his name on the blank leaf. Nelson, no doubt, reminded of his own beloved father, by the appearance of this venerable man, instantly ordered him to be admitted, complied with his request, and, kindly taking him by the hand, wished him a safe return to his flock. The pious pastor sank upon his knees, fervently imploring Heaven to bless his lordship, and declaring that he should now die happy whenever it pleased God to call him, since he had been thus highly favoured by 'the saviour of the Christian world.' In the same city, a wine-merchant, upwards of seventy years of age, requested to speak with Lady Hamilton, and informed her that he had some excellent old Rhenish wine, of 1725, which had been in his own possession

The Hamburgh Wine-Merchant.

about half a century, and which he had reserved for some very extraordinary occasion. Such a one had now arrived, and he hoped that her ladyship would prevail on Lord Nelson to accept six dozen bottles of this incomparable wine: part of it, he said, would then mingle with the heart's blood of that hero, and that thought would make him happy for the remainder of his life. Nelson, on being made acquainted with the request, repaired to the apartment where he was, cordially shook him by the hand, but declined the present. At length, however, he signified his acceptance of six bottles, on condition that the wine-merchant should dine with him on the following day. Twelve bottles were sent. His lordship, jocosely remarking that he hoped yet to gain half a dozen great victories, declared that he would keep six of them for the purpose of drinking a bottle after each. He did not fail to recollect this circumstance on returning to England, after the battle of Copenhagen, when he "devoutly drank the donor" of the old Rhenish. It is related that the latter, just after his first interview with his lordship, happening to meet an old acquaintance, who would have taken him by the hand, declined the friendly salute, observing, that he could not suffer any person to touch the hand which had been so highly honoured by being clasped in that of Lord Nelson.

On arriving at Hamburgh, his lordship, who had written for a frigate to convey himself and his friends to England, learning that none had been sent, hired a packet at Cuxhaven; and, after a tempestuous passage of five days, arrived on the 6th of November at Yarmouth. On landing, his carriage was drawn by the exulting multitude to the inn; the ships in the harbour hoisted their colours; the mayor and corporation presented him with the freedom of the town; and then, joined by all the naval officers on shore and

Arrival in London.

the principal inhabitants, attended him in procession to church. Bonfires and illuminations ushered in the night; and, next day, when he left the place, the volunteer cavalry escorted his carriage to the boundary of the county of Norfolk. At Ipswich, the people went out to meet him, dragged his carriage for a mile into the town, and, on leaving it, drew it three miles out. When captain of the *Agamemnon*, he had wished to obtain a seat in parliament for this place; but, when a friend consulted some of the leading members of the corporation on the subject, it was found that their demands were such as he could not prudently comply with. He observed that he would endeavour to find a preferable path into parliament, and that a time might come when the people of Ipswich might think it an honour to have had such a representative. Arriving in London, on the 9th of November, which happened to be Sunday, he proceeded to Nerot's Hotel, King Street, St. James's, where his father and Lady Nelson, who came from Norfolk to meet him, had taken up their residence. On the following day, being specially invited to the civic festivity of the inauguration of the Lord Mayor, the people took the horses from his carriage and drew him to Guildhall, where, after a sumptuous dinner, he was presented with the gold-hilted sword studded with diamonds voted to him by the Corporation of London after the battle of the Nile. "With this very sword," said his lordship, emphatically, in reply to the chamberlain's address, holding it up in his remaining hand, "I hope soon to aid in reducing our inveterate enemy within proper limits."

Nelson separates from his Wife.

CHAPTER IX.

1801.

NELSON SEPARATES FROM HIS WIFE — APPOINTED SECOND IN COMMAND IN AN EXPEDITION TO THE BALTIC — PASSAGE OF THE SOUND — BATTLE OF COPENHAGEN — NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE DANES, WHICH TERMINATE IN AN ARMISTICE — NELSON'S REMARKS ON THE DANISH COMMODORE FISCHER'S OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE BATTLE — HE IS CREATED VISCOUNT — FOLLOWS SIR HYDE PARKER TO THE BALTIC — IS APPOINTED COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF — VISITS REVEL — SOLICITS PERMISSION TO RESIGN ON ACCOUNT OF ILL HEALTH — RETURNS TO ENGLAND — TRAITS OF CHARACTER AND HABITS.

NELSON, though at the height of renown, loaded with honours, the object of public applause and admiration, was at this moment in private life a man to be pitied. His letters addressed to his lady during his absence in the Mediterranean had continued to breathe all the fond affection of his early attachment. Her reception of him when they again met was not what he expected, or what he deserved. She had been apprized of the influence which another had acquired over him—an influence to be ascribed as much to superior qualities of mind as of person; and it is to be regretted that she had not the good sense to perceive that coldness or ill humour are not the best means for winning back the wavering affections of a husband. No doubt jealousy stepped in to complete the work which incongruity of disposition had begun: and conjugal disharmony at length terminated in a formal separation, when Nelson made a settlement upon her ladyship of £1,800 per annum.

Nelson hoists his Flag in the San Josef.

It is alleged that Nelson's liberality to his relatives had given great displeasure to his lady, and that, when he transmitted directions for the distribution among them of part of the sum voted to him by the East India Company, she raised such bitter lamentations on the subject as caused his father, with whom she was residing, to decline accepting his portion of the gift. Her son, too, had by no means requited the warm interest which Nelson had always taken in his welfare. Instead of striving to conciliate his esteem, this imprudent young man had in fact insulted his benefactor in the grossest manner, and estranged himself as much as possible from his heart. Hence, a few months before his return from the Mediterranean, he wrote to Admiral Duckworth: "Perhaps you may be able to make something of Captain Nisbet: he has by his conduct almost broke my heart. . . . If, after all our pains, no good can be got out of either ship or captain, send the *Thalia* to England with some of the convoys; or send her any where out to try. I wished to have placed him with my friend, Cockburne; but, alas! he will not let me do for him what my heart wishes."

To escape from the pangs of connubial infelicity, Nelson determined to seek professional employment. He offered his services at the Admiralty: they were immediately accepted. On the 1st of January, 1801, he was promoted to the rank of vice-admiral of the blue, and, on the 9th, ordered to hoist his flag on board the *San Josef*, 112, one of the prizes which he had himself taken off Cape St. Vincent, then lying at Plymouth. He was afterwards directed to place himself under the command of Lord St. Vincent, and to proceed to Torbay as soon as his ship should be ready for sea. His old friend, Captain Hardy, was nominated to command the *San Josef* under him.

Coalition of the Northern Powers.

It was during his short residence on board the *San Josef* that he thus wrote to his friend, Lady Hamilton: "I am not in very good spirits, and, except that our country demands all our services and abilities to bring about an honourable peace, nothing should prevent my being the bearer of my own letter. But, I know you are so true and loyal an Englishwoman, that you would hate those who would not stand forth in defence of our king, laws, religion, and all that is dear to us. It is your sex that make us go forth, and seem to tell us — 'None but the brave deserve the fair' — and, if we fall, we still live in the hearts of those females. It is your sex that rewards us; it is your sex who cherish our memories; and, you, my dear honoured friend, are, believe me, the first, the best, of your sex. I have been the world around, and in every corner of it, and never yet saw your equal, or even one who could be put in comparison with you. You know how to reward virtue, honour, and courage; and never to ask if it is placed in a prince, duke, lord, or peasant."

The destination of his lordship was speedily changed. A league that struck at the dearest interests of Great Britain had, at the instigation of France, been concerted between the three northern powers, Denmark, Sweden, and Russia, who obstinately resisted the right claimed by this country of searching neutral vessels. The sovereign of the latter had even laid an embargo on all the British ships in his ports, whose crews he treated with unexampled cruelty. The system adopted by the Northern Coalition, as it was denominated, loudly called for the active and spirited interposition of the British government; accordingly, a powerful armament was fitted out to enforce that reason to which a milder conduct could not prevail upon these powers to listen. Of this armament Lord Nelson was appointed second in com-

Nelson appointed Second in Command in the Baltic.

mand, under Admiral Sir Hyde Parker. It is said, that, when his lordship went to receive his last orders previously to sailing, from his old friend and patron, the Earl of St. Vincent, who had recently been appointed first lord of the Admiralty, he found them contained in one short and emphatic sentence, pronounced with the usual energy of that illustrious seaman: "Damn it, Nelson, send them to the devil your own way!"

On the 2nd of March, his lordship having shifted his flag from the San Josef, which he left at Torbay, as she was unfit for the intended service in the North Seas, sailed from Portsmouth, in the *St. George*, of 98 guns, with a squadron of men-of-war, fire-ships, and gun-vessels, for the Downs, where he took on board a great number of flat-bottomed boats, and several pieces of heavy battering artillery, and then proceeded to Yarmouth, to join the other ships destined for this expedition. Here two companies of the rifle corps, under the orders of the Honourable Colonel Stewart, embarked in the *St. George*; besides which, the fleet took on board the 49th regiment, commanded by Colonel Brock, and a detachment of artillery.

On the 12th, at day-break, this armament, consisting of seventeen sail of the line, four frigates, ten gun-brigs, nearly as many bomb-ketches, and other small vessels, making, in the whole, nearly fifty sail, got under weigh from Yarmouth Roads; and on the 19th made the Scaw the northernmost point of the peninsula of Jutland, which was the first general rendezvous of the fleet. As it was well known that the Danes were making all possible efforts for defending the passage of the Sound, and rendering Copenhagen inaccessible to gun-vessels, it was matter of surprise that the fleet was not ordered to pass the Cattegat with a strong north-north-west wind, which was highly favourable

Negotiations with the Danes.

to such a movement. It is to be presumed that the commander-in-chief was deterred by the nature of his instructions from committing the country by a forcible passage of the Sound, till the result of the pacific propositions, which Mr. Vansittart, who had preceded the fleet in a frigate with a flag of truce, was charged to make, should be known. These proposals required the secession of Denmark from the northern alliance; a free passage for the British fleet through the Sound; and an admission of the right of English ships to search neutrals. They were instantly rejected, and the bearer of them received passports for his return.

Much precious time was thus lost, and both officers and men on board the British fleet suffered great hardship from foul winds, and heavy falls of sleet, snow, and rain, with chilling cold, between the 21st and 24th of March. At length, on the 26th, the fleet got under weigh, and stood to the westward, but merely to experience the mortification of further delay. On the following day, Sir Hyde Parker, in accordance with his instructions, sent a flag of truce to the governor of Cronenborg Castle, to inquire if he had received orders to fire on the British fleet as they passed into the Sound—intimating that he should consider the firing of the first gun as a declaration of war on the part of Denmark. To this inquiry Governor Stricker replied that, as a soldier, he could not meddle with politics; but he was not at liberty to suffer a fleet, whose intentions were not known, to approach the guns of the castle, which he had the honour to command. Sir Hyde then sent word to the governor that he should regard this answer as a declaration of war. During these negotiations, an incident occurred, which, though trivial in itself, proves the perfect security in which the Danes then thought themselves from any hostile at-

Passage of the Sound.

tack. An officer of distinction went on board the admiral, with a verbal answer to one of his proposals, and, finding some difficulty in expressing with accuracy the sentiments of his court, he was requested to communicate them in writing. The pen brought for this purpose happening to be ill-pointed, he held it up, and, with a sarcastic smile, observed to those around him: "If your guns are not better pointed than your pens, you will make but little impression on Copenhagen."

On the 28th the order was given to prepare for battle, which, as usual, was received with acclamations of joy by the British tars, who were convinced that the passage of the Sound was at length decided upon. The Sound, or channel between the Danish island of Seeland and the Swedish coast, is commanded by the castle of Cronenborg, on the former, and the fortress of Helsingborg on the latter: each of them was garrisoned by a force deemed sufficient to repel any attack. The means of annoyance on the Danish side had moreover been augmented by numerous batteries, through the fire of which it was thought impossible for any fleet to pass. This channel offers a prospect of singular interest. On the left, the Swedish side chiefly exhibits a mountainous and picturesque coast. On the right, appear the Danish islands of Saltholm, Amak, and part of Seeland, presenting a continual succession of fertile plains, rich woods, and neat rural mansions and villas. The island of Huen, also, famous for the observatory of the celebrated astronomer, Tycho Brahe, fails not to attract the notice of the passing voyager, who, on looking back from this point, sees the fortresses of Elsinneur, Cronenborg, and Helsingborg, apparently uniting and bounding a vast lake on the north; whilst before him he descries the open sea and extensive plain of Copenhagen, its spacious port crowded by

Passage of the Sound.

vessels, and the city, embellished with Gothic towers and lofty spires, spread out in all its magnificence.

It had long been a received opinion that the possession of Cronenborg Castle gave the Danes an uncontrolled command of the passage of the Sound. The Danes, trusting too much to the strength of this fortress, and relying on the co-operation of the Swedes at Helsingborg, had neglected by floating batteries to render the approach of the English fleet more difficult. On the morning of the 30th, the admiral made the signal to weigh and to form the order of battle. Nelson had shifted his flag on the preceding day from the *St. George* to the *Elephant*, 74, commanded by his old friend, Captain Foley, that he might have the advantage of a lighter ship for future operations. The nomination of the conqueror of Aboukir to lead the van division was regarded as a sure presage of victory, and diffused a spirit of confidence and emulation, which the name of Nelson never failed to excite among British seamen. Sir Hyde Parker, with his division in the rear, formed a corps of reserve. Such was the alacrity displayed in the execution of the admiral's orders, that, at half-past six, the *Monarch*, which had been appointed to lead the fleet, was abreast of the Danish batteries, which commenced a heavy fire from their whole range. It was immediately returned by some of the leading ships, but they soon desisted, on perceiving that they were beyond the reach of the enemy's guns, which kept up a continued blaze during the passage of the fleet. The Swedish batteries fired not a single shot, so that, by half-past ten, every ship had passed the Sound without the slightest accident, except the bursting of one of the guns of the *Isis*, by which six or seven of her crew were killed and wounded.

The whole fleet came to an anchor about noon, between the island of Huen and Copenhagen ; and im-

Preparations for the Attack of Copenhagen.

mediately afterwards Sir Hyde Parker, Lord Nelson, Captain Fremantle, Colonel Stewart, the captain of the fleet, and Captain Fyers, acting engineer to the expedition, went in a lugger to reconnoitre the enemy's force. The Danes opened a heavy fire on them, but they persevered in sounding till they were satisfied, and then returned to their respective ships.

The night of the 30th was employed by some of the most intelligent masters and pilots, under the direction of Captain Brisbane, in ascertaining the two channels around an extensive shoal, in front of the Danish capital, called the Middle Ground, and in laying down fresh buoys, the former ones having been either removed or displaced by the Danes. Next day, the fleet weighed from the island of Huen, and stood close in. The commander-in-chief and Lord Nelson proceeded in the Amazon frigate, Captain Riou, to examine the North Channel, and the enemy's flotilla from the eastward, and after a survey of some hours returned to the fleet. A council of war was held in the afternoon, and it was deemed advisable that the attack should be made from the eastward. Nelson offered his services to conduct it, requiring ten line of battle ships, and the whole of the smaller vessels. The commander-in-chief gave him two more line of battle ships than he demanded, and left all the arrangements to his own discretion. The night of the 31st was employed, as the preceding, in ascertaining, even by buoy-lights, the course of the upper channel under Nelson's immediate directions. On completing this business, he exclaimed: "Thank God, for having enabled me to get through this difficult and fatiguing part of my duty, which has really worn me down, and is infinitely more grievous to me than any resistance I can experience from an enemy!"

In the afternoon of the 1st of April, the division destined for the attack, consisting of twelve sail of

Position of the Danish Line of Defence.

the line, four frigates, three sloops, two brigs, six bomb-vessels, and two fire-ships, took their departure from the main body of the fleet, then lying about four miles below Copenhagen. Nelson, accompanied by a few chosen friends, had that morning made his last observations in the Amazon, and, on his return to the Elephant, threw out the wished-for signal to weigh. The shout with which it was received throughout the division was heard to a great distance. The gallant Riou led the way in the Amazon; the ships then weighed, and followed in succession through the narrow channel, coasting along the outer edge of the Middle Ground, until they doubled its farthest extremity, where they brought up. This shoal, of the same extent as the sea front of the city, lies exactly before it at the distance of about three quarters of a mile. In the intermediate channel, called the King's Channel, which has deep water, the Danes had arranged their line of defence as near the town as possible. It consisted of nineteen ships and floating batteries, flanked, at the extremity of the city, by two artificial islands at the mouth of the harbour, occupied by the Three Crowns Batteries; and it extended for a mile along the front of the town, leaving intervals for the batteries on the shore to play. About dark the whole fleet was at its anchorage off Draco Point, the headmost of the enemy's line being not more than two miles distant. As the Elephant let go her anchor, Nelson emphatically exclaimed: "I will fight them the moment I have a fair wind!" The small extent of the anchoring ground caused the ships to be much crowded; and, had the enemy taken advantage of this circumstance, they might have done the greatest mischief by means of shells from mortar-boats, or from Amak Island: two or three thrown during the evening served to show that the British ships were within their range. The Danes,

Nelson's Preparations for Action.

however, were too busily engaged during this night in manning their ships and strengthening their line of defence, not, as they afterwards admitted, from immediate expectation of attack, because they conceived the channel to be impassable for so large a squadron, but as a precaution against its nearer approach. Guard-boats were actively employed between our ships and the enemy, and Captain Hardy even rowed to their headmost ship, sounding round her with a pole, when he was apprehensive that the dropping of the lead might be heard. His chief object was to ascertain the bearing of the eastern extremity of the Middle Shoal, which actually proved to be the greatest obstacle that the assailants had to encounter.

The signal to prepare for action was made early in the evening, and, as soon as the fleet was at anchor, Nelson sat down to table with a large party of his comrades in arms. He was in the highest spirits, and drank "to a leading wind and to the success of the ensuing day." Admiral Graves, his lordship's second in command, Captains Foley, Hardy, Fremantle, Riou, Inman, and some other officers to whom he was particularly attached, were of this party, which broke up with feelings of admiration for their leader, and impatience to follow him to the approaching conflict. All the captains retired to their respective ships excepting Riou, with whom and Foley his lordship then arranged the order of battle, and drew up the instructions which were to be issued to each ship on the following morning. While dictating these instructions, Nelson was so exhausted by the fatigues of the three preceding days, that it was recommended to him by the officers, and indeed insisted upon by his old servant, Allen, who assumed much authority on such occasions, that he should go to his cot. It was placed on the cabin-deck for the purpose, and from it he continued to dictate. About

 His Instructions to his Captains.

eleven, Captain Hardy returned and reported the practicability of the channel, and the depth of water up to the ships of the enemy's line. The orders were completed about one o'clock, when half a dozen clerks in the foremost cabin proceeded to copy them. Nelson's impatience would not let him sleep, as he now might have done; every half hour he was calling out from his cot to these clerks 'to make haste, for the wind was becoming fair;' of which he was constantly receiving a report during the night. Their work being finished about six in the morning, his lordship, who was then up and dressed, breakfasted, and about seven made the signal for all captains, to whom the instructions were delivered.

The admiral's instructions form a document too important to be omitted :

"As Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson cannot with precision mark the situation of the different descriptions of the enemy's floating batteries and smaller vessels lying between their two-decked ships and hulks, the ships which are opposed to the floating batteries, &c. &c. will find their stations, by observing the stations of the ships 'to be opposed to the two-decked ships and hulks.

LINE OF BATTLE.

These ships are to fire in passing on to their stations.	}	Edgar, Ardent, Glatton, Isis, Agamemnon,	}	Are to lead in succession.
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"The Edgar to anchor abreast of No. 5 (a sixty-four gun ship, hulk). The Ardent to pass the Edgar, and anchor abreast of No. 6 and 7. The Glatton to pass the Ardent, and anchor abreast of No. 9, (a sixty-four gun ship, hulk). The Isis to anchor abreast of No. 2, (a sixty-four gun ship, hulk). The Agamemnon to anchor abreast of No. 1.

Nelson's Instructions to his Captains.

Bellona,
Elephant,
Ganges,
Monarch,
Defiance,
Russell,
Polyphemus,

To take their station and anchor as is prescribed by the following arrangement.

"*Memorandum.* No. 1 begins with the enemy's first ship to the southward.

No.	Rate.	Supposed No. of guns mounted on one side.	Station of the line as they are to anchor and engage.
1	74	28	Agamemnon. Desirée is to follow Agamemnon, and rake No. 2.
2	64	26	
3 {	Low floating batteries, ship-rigged, rather lie within the line.	10	Isis. It is hoped the Desirée's fire will not only rake No. 1, but also rake these two floating batteries. Capt. Rose is to place the six gun-brigs so as to rake them also.
4 }		10	
5	64	27	Edgar.
6 {	Pontoon Frigate, hulk	10	{ Ardent.
7 }		12	
8 {	Small, no guns visible.	30	Glatton.
9 }			
10 {	Ship, gun-boat Pontoons, or Floating bat.	11	{ Bellona to give her attention to support the Glatton. Elephant.
11 }		12	
12 }		9	
13	74	36	{ Ganges. Monarch. Defiance. Russel. Polyphemus.
14 {	Pontoons or Floating bat.	12	
15 }		12	
16	64	30	
17	64	30	
18	64	30	
19	64	30	
20 {	A small ship supposed a bomb.	11	

Nelson's Instructions to his Captains.

“The six gun-boats Captain Rose is to place with the Jamaica, to make a raking fire upon No. 1. The gun-boats, it is presumed, may get far enough astern of No. 1, to rake Nos. 3 and 4, and Captain Rose is to advance, with the ships and vessels under his orders, to the northward, as he may perceive the British fire to cease where he is first stationed.

“Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, being subdued, which is expected to happen at an early period, the Isis and Agamemnon are to cut their cables, and immediately make sail and take their station ahead of the Polyphemus, in order to support that part of the line. One flat-boat, manned and armed, is to remain upon the off-side of each line of battle ship. The remaining flat-boats, with the boats for boarding, which will be sent by Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, under the command of the first lieutenant of the London, are to keep as near to the Elephant as possible, but out of the line of fire, and to be ready to receive the directions of Lord Nelson. The four launches, with anchors and cables, which will be sent by Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, under the command of a lieutenant of the London, to be as near to the Elephant as possible, out of the line of fire, ready to receive orders from Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson. The Alcmena, Blanche, Arrow, Dart, Zephyr, and Otter fire-ships, are to proceed under the orders of Captain Riou, of the Amazon, to perform such service as he is directed by Lord Nelson.”

In addition to the arrangements detailed in these instructions, it may be mentioned that the land forces and a body of 500 seamen, under the command of Captain Fremantle and the Hon. Colonel Stewart, were to have stormed and destroyed the Three Crowns Battery, as soon as its fire should be silenced. It had also been agreed that the commander-in-chief, with the remainder of the fleet, as a reserve, should

Irresolution of the Pilots.

get under weigh at the same moment with his lordship, to menace from the northward the Three Crowns Batteries, and the four Danish ships of the line at the entrance of the arsenal, as also to cover any disabled ships as they came out of action. This design, however, was frustrated owing to the unfavourable wind and the strong current.

Ever since the guns of Cronenborg Castle had put an end to suspense and proclaimed the approach of assailants, the Danes had been making the most spirited preparations for their reception. The students formed themselves into a corps of twelve hundred, and the ships were manned by persons of all classes, hastily collected for the emergency; these people, unacquainted with the exercise of great guns, were all day employed in practising; and for three successive nights they had been kept on the alert. They awaited the attack with all the firmness befitting a brave nation.

Daylight on the 2^d of April brought with it a fair wind for their approaching foes. Between eight and nine o'clock the pilots, mostly masters of vessels trading from ports in Scotland and the north of England to the Baltic, were ordered on board the Elephant. They manifested a most unpleasant degree of hesitation, when the point respecting the bearing of the east end of the Middle Ground and the exact line of deep water in the King's Channel came under consideration. The admiral urged them to be steady, to be resolute, and to decide—the wind was fair, the signal made for action, and not a moment to be lost. Still not one of them would take charge of the ship. “The pilots have no other thought,” said Nelson, “than to keep the ship clear of danger, and their own silly heads clear of shot.” At length Mr. Bryerly, master of the Bellona, volunteered to lead the squadron: his example operated upon the

The British Squadron proceeds to the Attack.

rest, who repaired on board their respective ships, and the signal was given to weigh in succession; this was quickly obeyed by the Edgar, Captain Murray, who had been appointed to lead, and he advanced in gallant style for the channel. The Agamemnon was to follow, but she happened to take a course in a direct line for the end of the shoal of the Middle Ground, which she could not weather, and was obliged to anchor. The signal for the Polyphemus was then made, and this change in the order of sailing was most promptly executed. It nevertheless caused the Edgar to be for a considerable time unsupported: when within range of the Provesteen, she received the fire of that ship, but returned not a shot till she was nearly opposite to the number destined for her by the instructions; she then poured in her broadside with great effect. The Polyphemus was followed by the Isis, Bellona, and Russell. The first of these three took her station most gallantly, and had this day the severest birth of any ship, the Monarch herself perhaps not excepted. The Bellona and Russell, in going down the channel, kept too close to the starboard shoal and ran aground: they were, however, within range of shot, and maintained a spirited fire upon such of the enemy's ships as they could reach. As the water was supposed to shoal on the larboard shore, each ship had been ordered to pass her leader on the starboard side. When it came to the turn of the Elephant, which bore the admiral's flag, his lordship, thinking that the Bellona and Russell had kept on too far in that direction, made their signal to close with the enemy. Perceiving that this was not done, owing to their being aground, which he was not aware of, he, with his usual presence of mind, ordered the Elephant's helm to starboard, thus deviating from the intended course, and went within those ships. The same course was

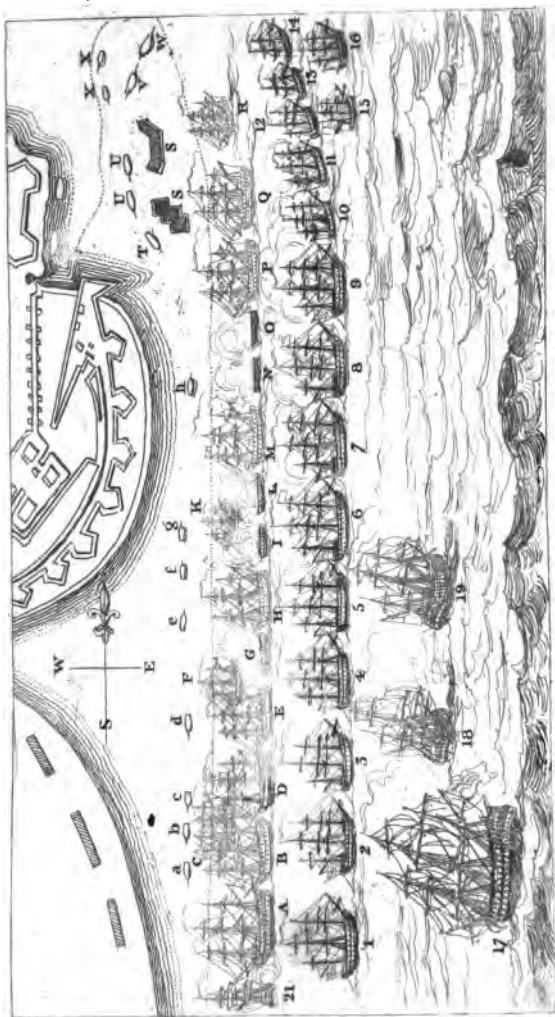
Force of the British Squadron.

pursued by those which followed, and thus, in all probability, the greater part of the squadron were saved from grounding. Each ship, as she arrived nearly opposite to the number allotted to her in the Danish line, let go her anchor by the stern, with sails loose, but clewed up, the wind blowing freshly at south, and presented her broadside to the enemy. The action began about five minutes past ten; in half an hour, half the British squadron were engaged, and in another hour the battle became general.

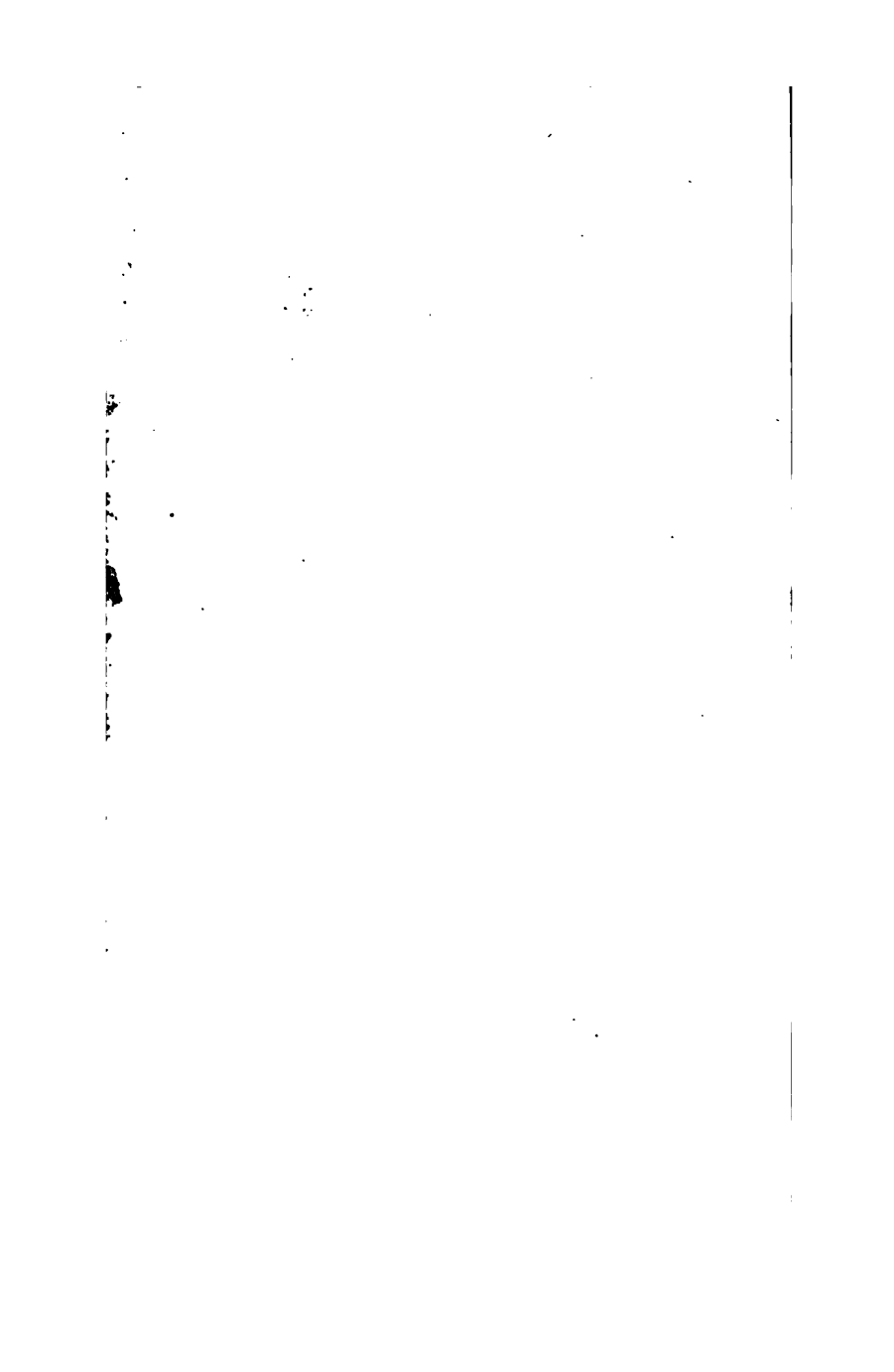
The following list and annexed plan will convey a clear idea of the force and position of the British squadron and the Danish line of defence :

BRITISH FORCE.

Ships.	Guns.	Commanders.
1. Polyphemus	64	Captain J. Lawford.
2. Isis	50	——— J. Walker.
3. Edgar	74	——— G. Murray.
4. Ardent	58	——— T. Bertie.
5. Glatton	58	——— W. Bligh.
6. Elephant	74	{ Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson. Captain T. Foley.
7. Ganges	74	——— T. F. Fremantle.
8. Monarch	74	——— J. R. Mosse.
9. Defiance	74	{ Rear-Admiral Sir T. Graves. Captain R. Retalick.
10. Amazon frigate	38	——— E. Riou.
11. Blanche frigate	36	——— G. E. Hamond.
12. Alcmena frigate	32	——— S. Sutton.
13. Arrow sloop	30	——— W. Bolton.
14. Dart sloop	30	——— J. F. Devonshire.
15. Zephyr sloop	14	——— C. Upton.
16. Otter sloop	14	——— G. M'Kinley.
17. Agamemnon (at anchor on the edge and outside of the shoal)	64	——— R. D. Fancourt.
18. Russell (aground)	74	——— W. Cumming.
19. Bellona (aground)	74	——— T. B. Thompson.
20. Bomb vessels, &c.		
21. La Desirée frigate (rak- ing the Provosteen)	40	——— H. Inman



Plan of the Battle of COPENHAGEN .



Danish Line of Defence.

DANISH FORCE.

Ships.	Guns.	Commanders.	Remarks.
A. Provesteen . . .	64	Capt. Lassen.	Taken and burnt.
B. Vagriem	50	{ Aid-de-Camp Ris-	Ditto.
		{ brig.	
C. Rendsborg . . .	34	Capt. Lieut. Egede.	Ditto.
D. Nyborg	20	————— Rothe.	Sunk.
E. Jytland	50	————— Brandt.	Taken and burnt.
F. Suerfiaken . . .	20	Lieut. Somerfeldt.	Ditto.
G. Kronborg	26	————— Hauch.	Ditto.
H. Infodstretten .	64	Capt. Thura.	Ditto.
I. Hajen	28	————— Moller.	Ditto.
K. Elven	—	————— Holstein.	Escaped.
L. Grenier's Radeau	24	————— Willemoes.	Sunk.
M. Dannebrog . . .	62	{ Com. Fischer.	} Caught fire and blew up.
		{ Capt. F. Braun.	
N. Aggerhuus . . .	20	Lieut. Fasting.	Sunk.
O. CharlotteAmalia	26	Capt. Kofod.	Taken and burnt.
P. Holsteen	60	————— Ahrenfeldt.	} Taken & brought away.
Q. Syccelland . . .	64	————— Harboe.	
R. Hielperen	20	{ ——— Lt. Liliens-	} Escaped.
		{ kiold.	
SS. Crown Batteries, mounting 160 pieces of cannon.			
T. A frigate ready for sea.			
UU. Two ships of the line ready for sea.			
VW. Two ships of the line. XX. Two gun brigs.			
a b c, &c. Armed schooners and vessels, the whole supported by the Batteries, &c.			

A mind less invincible than Nelson's might have been discouraged by the accidents which had deprived him of the aid of one fourth of his line of battle ships, even before they could get into action. He felt, however, that he could not retreat to wait for reinforcements, without compromising the honour of his country. His agitation, therefore, while the ships were taking their stations, was extreme; it was not the agitation of indecision, but of ardent, animated patriotism, panting for glory, which had appeared to be within his reach, but seemed to be escaping from his grasp. But, no sooner had all the

Battle of Copenhagen.

ships taken their stations than the countenance of their chief was observed to brighten and his good humour flowed. The firing of a thousand guns raised his spirits to the highest pitch; and his conversation became joyous, animated, elevated, and delightful. The Elephant's station was in the centre, opposite to the Danish commodore Fischer, who commanded in the Dannebrog, 62. The distance between the combatants was nearly a cable's length. Nelson had been most anxious to get nearer; but the same error which had led the two ships upon the shoal caused the masters and pilots to dread shoaling their water on the larboard shore; when, therefore, the lead was at a quarter less five, they refused to approach nearer and insisted on the anchor being let go. It was afterwards found that the water deepened up to the very sides of the enemy's ships, so that our's might have closed with them, and terminated the murderous conflict in much less time. As it was, the Elephant engaged in little more than four fathom. The Glatton had her station immediately astern of the flag-ship; the Ganges, Monarch, and Defiance ahead, not above a half cable's length apart. The judgment with which the station of each ship was calculated in that intricate channel was admirable throughout. Nothing but the failure of the three ships that were aground, and whose force was to have been opposed to the Three Crowns Battery, left this day, as conspicuous for seamanship as for courage, incomplete. The gallant Riou, perceiving the blank left in the original plan for the attack of that battery, proceeded down the line with his squadron of frigates, and attempted, but in vain, to perform the duty which had been expected of the absent ships.

The Danes, on their part, made a most gallant defence. Captain Thura, of the Infoedstretten, 64, fell at the commencement of the action, and all his

Battle of Copenhagen.

officers, excepting two, were killed or wounded. In this state of confusion, the colours were struck, as the Danes allege, by accident. A boat was sent off to convey the tidings of her commander's death to the prince-royal, who had ever since the dawn of day taken his station upon a battery. On receiving the intelligence, he turned to the officers around him. "Gentlemen," said he, "Thura is killed: which of you will take the command?" "I will," replied in a feeble voice Captain Schroedersee, who had recently retired from the service on account of ill health. Patriotism seemed to inspire his wasted form with fresh vigour, and he hastened on board; the crew again hoisted their colours, but scarcely had the new commander reached the deck, before a ball struck him and he fell. Lieutenant Nissen then assumed the command, and continued to fight the ship for the remainder of the day.

Early in the conflict the *Dannebrog* took fire, and Commodore Fischer removed his broad pendant to the *Holstein*, but Captain Braun continued to make the most gallant resistance till he lost his right hand. Captain Lemming succeeded to the command, and though the flames raged around him and threatened immediate destruction, the *Dannebrog* kept up her fire till the close of the engagement.

Lieutenant Willemoes, a youth only seventeen, rendered himself conspicuous by the gallantry which he displayed in the command of a floating battery, consisting of a square raft composed of beams, on which a flooring was laid to support the guns, and having a breastwork full of port-holes, but no masts. This youth manœuvred his guns with such skill upon this rude structure, against the *Elephant*, as to attract the notice of Nelson himself.

At one P.M. but little impression seemed to have been made on the Danish line of defence. On our

Battle of Copenhagen.

part, the Isis had suffered severely from the superior weight of the Provesteen's fire; and, had it not been for the judicious diversion made by the Desirée, which raked her, and other assistance from the Polyphemus, the Isis must have been destroyed: both that ship and the Bellona had moreover sustained serious injury from the bursting of some of their guns. The Monarch was also suffering severely from the united fire of the Holstein and Seeland. Only two of the bomb-vessels could get to their station on the Middle Ground, and open their mortars on the arsenal, directing their shells over both fleets. Of the squadron of gun-brigs, one only was able to weather the east end of the Middle Ground and to get into action. The division of the commander-in-chief attempted to act according to the preconcerted plan, but found it impossible to do more than menace the entrance of the harbour. The Elephant was warmly engaged with the Dannebrog and two heavy praams—one of them that of Willemoes—on her bow and quarter. Signals of distress were flying on board the Bellona and Russell, and of inability in the Agamemnon. Though the enemy's fire was somewhat relaxed, yet at one o'clock the result of the contest still appeared doubtful. The mind of the commander-in-chief, unable to advance to the succour of his brave countrymen, yet near enough to be aware of the accidents which had so materially reduced Nelson's force, was harassed by the most painful uncertainty. Despairing of success, from the long resistance of the enemy, he resolved to make the signal of recall, arguing that Nelson, if he felt confident of victory, would disregard it; if otherwise, it would afford him an opportunity of retreating without disgrace. Such was the feeling with which Sir Hyde Parker ordered the signal to be thrown out for the action to cease.

Lord Nelson was at this time, as he had been

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during the whole of the action, walking the star-board side of the quarter-deck; sometimes much animated, at others heroically sublime in his observations. A shot through the main-mast knocked a few splinters about him. "It is warm work," said he, with a smile, to a bystander, "and this day may be the last to any of us at a moment." Then, stopping short at the gangway, he added with emotion: "But, mark you, I would not be elsewhere for thousands." The next moment the signal, No. 39, was made on board the London, the flag-ship of the commander-in-chief. The signal-lieutenant reported it to him. He continued his walk apparently without taking notice of it. The lieutenant, meeting his lordship at the next turn, asked if he should repeat it. "No," replied Nelson, "acknowledge it." As the officer was returning to the poop, his lordship called after him, "Is No. 16 still hoisted?" This was the signal for close action, which had been hoisted from the beginning. The lieutenant answered that it was. "Mind you keep it so," rejoined the admiral. He then paced the deck considerably agitated, which was always known by his moving the stump of his right arm. After a turn or two, he said to Mr. Fergusson, surgeon to the forces, "Do you know what's shown on board the commander-in-chief? No. 39." Fergusson asked what that meant. "Why, to leave off action. Leave off action!" he repeated; adding with a shrug, "Now damn me if I do." He then observed to Captain Foley, "You know, Foley, I have only one eye; I have a right to be blind sometimes;" and, with an archness peculiar to his character, putting the glass to his blind eye, he exclaimed, "Really, I do not see the signal." This remarkable signal was therefore only acknowledged on board the Elephant, not repeated. It was repeated, however, by Admiral Graves, who was not able to distinguish

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the conduct of the Elephant on the occasion ; but, either by a fortunate accident or intentionally, No. 16 was not displaced. The squadron of frigates obeyed the signal and hauled off. That brave officer, Captain Riou, was killed by a raking shot when the Amazon showed her stern to the Three Crowns Battery. Though wounded on the head by a splinter, he was sitting upon a gun encouraging his men. He had expressed his grief at being thus obliged to retreat, without accomplishing with his frigates what three sail of the line had been destined to perform, and nobly observed, "What will Nelson think of us!" His clerk was killed by his side : another shot cut down several of the marines, while hauling on the main brace, on which Riou exclaimed, "Come then, my boys, let us die all together!" Scarcely were these words uttered, when a shot severed him in two. The signal for recall probably saved the frigates, which were no match for the Three Crowns Battery, from destruction.

The action now continued with unabated vigour. About two, P.M., the greater part of the Danish line had ceased to fire. Some of the lighter ships were adrift, and the slaughter on board the enemy, who kept reinforcing their crews from the shore, was dreadful. To take possession of such ships as had struck was, however, a matter of extreme difficulty ; partly because they were protected by the batteries on Amak Island, and partly owing to the irregular fire made from the ships themselves upon the British boats as they approached. Such was the course pursued by the Dannebrog, although that ship was not only on fire and had struck, but Commodore Fischer had left her and removed his pendant to the Holstein. A renewed attack on her by the Elephant and Glatton, for a quarter of an hour, not only completely silenced and disabled the Dannebrog, but, by the use

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of grape, killed nearly every man in the praams ahead and astern of that unfortunate ship. When the smoke cleared away, the Dannebrog was seen drifting in flames before the wind, spreading terror throughout the enemy's line. The British boats rowed up from all sides to save the crew, who were throwing themselves from her at every port-hole; but the number saved was small, as there were few who had not been wounded by the last broadsides. She drifted to leeward, and blew up about half-past three.

It was about an hour earlier, after the Dannebrog was adrift and had ceased to fire, that the action was found to be over along the whole line astern of the Elephant; though not with the ships ahead and with the Three Crowns Battery. Whether from ignorance of the custom of war, or from confusion on board the prizes, the boats sent to take possession of them were, as it has been just related, repulsed from the ships themselves or fired at from Amak Island. Nelson was naturally irritated at this, and observed that 'he must either send on shore and stop this irregular proceeding, or send in our fire-ships and burn them.' He accordingly retired to the stern gallery, and there wrote with the greatest despatch the following: "Vice-admiral Lord Nelson has been commanded to spare Denmark when she no longer resists. The line of defence which covered her shores has struck to the British flag. Let the firing cease then, that he may take possession of his prizes, or he will blow them into the air along with their crews who have so nobly defended them. The brave Danes are the brothers and should never be the enemies of the English." He addressed it "To the brothers of Englishmen, the brave Danes." A wafer was presented to him to seal this letter, which he refused, observing that he never closed a letter in his life which

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more demanded formality, and that it should not betray any appearance of hurry. He accordingly asked for wax, sent to the cock-pit for a lighted candle, and, having affixed a larger seal than usual, despatched his aid-de-camp, Sir Frederick Thesiger, on shore with the letter, which was to be delivered to the prince royal, who was found near the sally-port animating his people. While the boat was absent, the brisk fire of the ships ahead of the Elephant and the approach of the Ramilies and Defence, belonging to the division of the commander-in-chief, caused the remainder of the enemy's line, eastward of the Three Crowns, to strike. That formidable battery continued its fire, but at too long a range to do serious damage to any of the assailants, excepting the Monarch, whose loss in men on this day, including her brave captain, Mosse, exceeded that of any line of battle ship during the war. The plan formed for storming this outwork with 1500 picked men, under the command of the Hon. Colonel Stewart and Captain Fremantle, has been already mentioned; the boats for this service had been kept on the starboard side of each ship during the action: but its execution was rendered unnecessary by the arrival, soon after three o'clock, of the Danish adjutant-general Lindholm, who directed the fire of the battery to cease. The signal for doing the same was made from the Elephant to the British ships engaged; and the action closed, after lasting five hours, four of which had been warmly contested.

Before Lindholm reached the Elephant, Nelson had consulted his trusty friends, Foley and Fremantle, as to the practicability of advancing with the ships that were least damaged upon that part of the Danish line of defence which was yet uninjured. Their opinions were against this step: they advised, on the other hand, that the fleet should remove, while the

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wind yet held fair, from the intricate channel. He was now prepared to receive Lindholm, who was commissioned by the prince-regent to inquire more minutely into the purport of Nelson's message. His reply was: "Lord Nelson's object, in sending the flag of truce was humanity: he therefore consents that hostilities shall cease, and that the wounded Danes may be taken on shore. And Lord Nelson will take his prisoners out of the vessels, and burn and carry off his prizes as he shall think fit. Lord Nelson, with humble duty to H. R. H. the Prince of Denmark, will consider this as the greatest victory he has ever gained, if it may be the cause of a happy reconciliation and union between his own most gracious sovereign and the King of Denmark." Having finished his letter and despatched it by Sir F. Thesiger, his lordship referred the adjutant-general to Sir Hyde Parker, who was at anchor about four miles off, for a conference on the important point referred to in the conclusion of this communication. Lindholm offered no objection, but proceeded to the London. No sooner was he gone, than Nelson, taking advantage of the opportunity afforded by this long row out to sea for our leading ships, which were much crippled, and whose course was under the immediate fire of the Three Crowns Battery, to clear the shoals, made the signal for the Glatton, Elephant, Ganges, Defiance, and Monarch, to weigh in succession. The Monarch, as first ship, presently struck on a shoal, but was pushed over it by the Ganges taking her amid-ships. The Glatton went clear, but the Defiance and Elephant grounded about a mile from the Three Crowns; and there they remained fixed, in spite of all the efforts of their fatigued crews, the former till ten o'clock at night, the latter till eight. In case of the renewal of hostilities, their situation would certainly have been perilous. Owing partly to the

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many contrary accidents which he had experienced, partly to the scene of devastation which surrounded him, and particularly the blowing up of the Dannebrog, Nelson's spirits were now more than usually depressed. "Well," he exclaimed, "I have fought contrary to orders, and shall perhaps be hanged. Never mind, let them." The excitement of battle had given place to anxious uncertainty, and his mind was, at the same time, most painfully affected by the deplorable state of the wounded Danes, numbers of whom, as no surgeons had been provided to attend to them, were found bleeding to death on board the captured vessels. About four o'clock, the Elephant being aground, his lordship followed Lindholm to the London, where negotiations commenced. The adjutant-general returned to Copenhagen the same evening, when it was agreed that all prizes should be surrendered, that the suspension of hostilities should continue for twenty-four hours, and that the whole of the Danish wounded should be received on shore. Nelson then repaired on board the St. George; and the night was actively passed by the boats of the division which had not been engaged in getting afloat the ships that were ashore, and in bringing out the prizes. Towards the close of the action, the *Desirée* frigate, going to the aid of the *Bellona*, became fast on the same shoal; but neither those ships nor the *Russell* were in any danger from the Danish batteries, as it has been erroneously asserted.

The results of this day plunged Copenhagen into a state of terror, astonishment, and mourning. The oldest inhabitant had never seen a shot fired in hostility against his native country: and now there was scarcely a family but had a relative among the slain or the wounded. These amounted, with the prisoners, to 6000. The prizes consisted of six line of battle ships, and eight praams, or floating batteries, besides

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one ship of the line and two smaller vessels burnt and sunk during the action. One ship and two praams had, by the admission of the Danes themselves, cut their cables during the engagement and escaped into the inner road. The loss of the victors in this hard-contested fight was 254 killed and 953 wounded. Among the former, were the brave Captain Mosse of the *Monarch*, which ship suffered most severely, having 210 killed and wounded, and Captain Riou of the *Amazon*, concerning whom Nelson, writing a few days afterwards to Lord St. Vincent, says, "I do not know his circumstances; but I recollect, when he was at death's door in the *Guardian*, in 1788, he recommended a mother and sisters. I need say no more." That mother expired between the 2^d of April and the arrival of the melancholy news in England. To both these officers their grateful country has erected monuments in St. Paul's cathedral. Among the wounded, Captain Sir T. B. Thompson, of the *Bellona*, who had so gallantly defended the *Leander* when she was taken in the Mediterranean, lost a leg.

In the morning of the 3^d of April, when it was scarcely light, Nelson repaired in his gig, his usual conveyance, on board the *Elephant*, which he supposed to be still aground. The cold and fatigue of a long row, at that early hour, in a northern sea, had not the effect of either causing this extraordinary man to indulge in rest, or to forget those for whose fate he was concerned. His delight and praises on finding the ship afloat were unbounded. He took a hasty breakfast, and then rowed to such of the prizes as were not yet removed from the shore. Here he gave another proof of the eccentricity as well as boldness of his character. Learning that one of the Danish line of battle ships, the *Seeland*, the last that struck, and which was under the immediate protection

Nelson goes on Shore.

of the Three Crowns Battery, had refused to acknowledge herself to be captured, and made some quibble about the colours and not the pendant having been hauled down, he ordered one of our brigs to approach her, and proceeded in his gig to one of the enemy's ships which were within that battery, in order to communicate with Commodore Fischer, whose flag was flying on board the *Elephanten*. He went on board, and claimed the *Seeland*. The Danish officers denied that she had struck. Nelson declared upon his honour that she had, adding that, unless she were immediately given up, he would haul down the flag of truce. The Danes said that they wished to treat with Lord Nelson in person. "I am Lord Nelson," he cried: "see, here's my fin"—at the same time throwing aside his green dreadnought, showing the stump of his right arm, and exposing his three stars. The ship was given up without further altercation. The remainder of the day was actively employed in refitting the squadron, securing the prizes, distributing the prisoners, and negotiating with the shore. It was resolved that on the following day Nelson should wait on the prince-regent.

Accordingly, on the 4th, his lordship went on shore, accompanied by Captains Hardy and Fremantle. The populace, assembled in vast numbers on this occasion, showed a mixture of admiration, curiosity, and displeasure. A strong guard secured his safety and seemed necessary to keep off the mob, whose rage, though mingled with admiration at his thus trusting himself among them, was no more than might naturally have been expected. The slaughter of the 2^d and the return of the wounded to the care of their friends on the following day were certainly not events likely to dispose the Danes to receive their conqueror with much cordiality: and it savoured perhaps of rashness in Nelson thus early to risk himself among

Nelson's Interview with the Crown Prince.

them : but with him the service of his country was always paramount to every other consideration. On landing, he declined the use of a carriage, and walked to the palace of the Octagon, where the crown prince received him in the hall, conducted him up stairs, and presented him to the king, by whose infirm state he was deeply affected. Having adjusted those arrangements which were the objects of this interview, his lordship accepted the prince's invitation to dinner. During the repast he spoke in the warmest terms of the valour of the Danes, and asserted that, though the French fought bravely, they could not have kept up for one hour the conflict which the Danes had maintained for four. "I have been," said he, "in one hundred and five engagements in the course of my life, but this has been the most terrible of all." He requested the crown prince to send for and introduce him to the young officer whom he described as having done wonders during the conflict by attacking the Elephant in his praam immediately under her lower guns. This was the stripling Willemoes, whose conduct has been already noticed. Nelson greeted him with the affection of a brother, and intimated to the prince that he deserved to be made an admiral. "My lord," replied his royal highness, with peculiar felicity, "if I were to make all my brave officers admirals, I should have no captains or lieutenants in my service." The crown prince, however, afterwards presented this youth with a medallion commemorative of his gallantry, and gave him the command of the royal yacht, in which he paid his annual visit to Holstein.

The whole object of the battle of the 2^d had been to make way for the bomb-vessels to bombard the city of Copenhagen, while the British fleet should proceed against the Swedes and Russians in the Baltic. This end being accomplished by the destruction

Destruction of the Prizes.

and capture of the ships composing the whole line of defence, the bomb-vessels, seven in number, carrying fourteen mortars, under the orders of Captain Fyers, anchored in the situation which they had occupied within a mile of the dock-yard. The city, the dock-yard in particular, together with the remnant of the Danish navy in the inner road, lay directly within their range, and in this position they remained for three days, expecting every moment a signal to commence operations. The negociation continued during this interval, which was employed in refitting the fleet and in destroying the prizes. The Holstein alone was saved, and sent to England with the wounded men, under the care of Surgeon Fergusson. The destruction of the prizes, though deemed necessary by the commander-in-chief, with a view to the further active service of his fleet, was much regretted by Nelson. Writing to Lord St. Vincent he says, "Whether Sir Hyde Parker may mention the subject to you, I know not, for he is rich and does not want it: nor is it, you will believe me, any desire to get a few hundred pounds that actuates me to address this letter to you; but, my dear lord, justice to the brave officers and men who fought on that day. It is true, our opponents were in hulks and floats only adapted for the position they were placed in; but that made our battle so much the harder, and victory so much the more difficult to obtain. Believe me, I have weighed all circumstances, and in my conscience I think that the king should send a gracious message to the House of Commons for a gift to this fleet; for what must be the natural feelings of the officers and men belonging to it, to see their rich commander-in-chief burn all the fruits of their victory, which, if fitted up and sent to England, as many of them might have been by dismantling part of our fleet, would have sold for a good round sum." In writing to Mr. Davison also,

Negotiation for an Armistice.

his lordship complained of the manner in which the carpenters had condemned the *Seeland*, 74, which he described to have been as large and full as fine a ship as the *Sans Pareil*; and that they had reported the *Infoedstretten*, 64, to have been an old ship, in consequence of which she was destroyed, though she had been only seven years from the stocks and never at sea.

Meanwhile, Nelson went on shore daily for the purpose of adjusting the terms of an armistice. In one of these visits he inspected the Naval Academy, and, with a generosity equally honourable to himself and to a brave enemy, he presented some gold medals to be distributed among the most skilful of the midshipmen. On the 9th, he repaired to the palace, surrounded by an immense crowd, who had begun to appreciate his exalted character, to meet the commissioners appointed to discuss the terms of the proposed armistice. The seventh article fixed its duration at fourteen weeks, at the expiration of which it should be in the power of either party to recommence hostilities on giving fourteen days' notice. The Danish commissioners objected to this article on the point of duration, and candidly confessed their apprehensions of the court of Russia. Nelson, with equal candour, assured them that his reason for insisting on so long a term was that he might have time to settle accounts with the Russian fleet before he returned to them. On this point neither party seemed disposed to yield; and one of the Danish commissioners even hinted at a renewal of hostilities. This was said in French. Nelson, who understood sufficient of that language to make out what the commissioner said, turned to one of the officers who accompanied him, and exclaimed, with warmth, "Renew hostilities! Tell him we are ready at a moment — ready to bombard this very night." The com-

Conclusion of an Armistice.

missioner made a polite apology, but the conference broke up without deciding upon the duration of the armistice, which was left for reference to the crown prince. A levee was afterwards held in one of the state-rooms, the whole of which had been stripped of their furniture, from the apprehension of a bombardment. The prince then led the way up stairs to dinner. Nelson, leaning on the arm of a friend, as he followed, was thinking more of the bombardment than of the dinner. "Though," he whispered, "I have only one eye, yet I see all this will burn very well." After the entertainment, at which he was placed on the prince's right hand, and much cordiality prevailed, he was closetted for some time with his royal highness, who at length acceded to the contested article. Returning on board the *St. George*, he thus wrote on the same day to Earl St. Vincent:—"Just returned from getting the armistice ratified. I am tired to death. No man but those who are on the spot can tell what I have gone through and do suffer. I make no scruple in saying that I would have been at Revel fourteen days ago; that, without this armistice, the fleet would never have gone but by order from the Admiralty; and with it, I dare say, we shall not go this week. I wanted Sir Hyde to let me, at least, go and cruize off Carlsrone, to prevent the Revel ships from getting in. I said I would not go to Revel, to take any of those laurels which I was sure he would reap there. Think for me, my dear lord; and, if I have deserved well, let me retire; if ill, for Heaven's sake supersede me, for I cannot exist in this state." On the following day the Danish commissioners repaired on board the *London*, where the convention was ratified by the commander-in-chief. It stipulated that, while the armistice should be in force, the treaty of armed neutrality, as far as related to the co-operation of

Nelson's Remarks on Fischer's Official Report.

Denmark, should be suspended; that the Danish armed ships and vessels should remain in their actual state, as to armament, equipment, and hostile position; and that the Danish coasts and commerce should for the same time be secure from molestation or attack from any British force whatever.

The Danish commodore Fischer, in his official letter to the crown-prince, detailing the events of the battle, gave great offence to Nelson by some unfair statements and representations. He asserted that though the English had two ships to one Danish, yet the fire of this superior force was so much weakened for an hour before the end of the battle, that several of the English ships, and Nelson's in particular, could fire only single shots. He said exultingly that this hero himself, in the middle and very heat of the battle, sent a flag of truce on shore to propose a cessation of hostilities; that it was announced to him that two English ships of the line had struck; and that the advantages gained by the enemy consisted merely in ships not fit for use, in spiked cannon, and gunpowder damaged by sea-water. To these and other inaccuracies Nelson deemed it incumbent on him to reply, in a letter addressed to adjutant-general Lindholm. He said that, had Commodore Fischer confined himself to his own veracity, and not called upon the crown-prince as witness to the truth of his statements, he should have treated his official letter with the contempt it deserved. He contended that the Danish line of defence to the southward of the Crown Islands was more numerous than the British squadron; that we had only five sail of 74, two of 64, two of 50, and one frigate engaged; that two of our seventy-fours and one 64 grounded by accident. Towards the latter end of the action, a bomb-vessel threw some shells into the arsenal. Warming as he proceeded, "I am ready," said his lordship, "to admit that

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many of the Danish officers and men behaved as well as men could do, and deserved not to be abandoned by their commander. I am justified in saying this from Commodore Fischer's own declaration. He states that, after he quitted the Dannebrog, she long contested the battle: if so, more shame for him to quit so many brave fellows. Here was no manœuvring; it was downright fighting: and it was his duty to have shown an example of firmness becoming the high trust reposed in him. He went in such a hurry, if he went before she struck, which, but for his own declaration I can hardly believe, that he forgot to take his broad pendant with him, for both pendant and ensign were struck together; and it was from that circumstance that I claimed the commodore as a prisoner of war. He then went, as he said, on board the Holstein, the brave captain of which did not want him, where he did not hoist his pendant: from this ship he went on shore, either before or after she struck, or he would have been again a prisoner. As to his nonsense about victory, his royal highness will not much credit him. I sunk, burnt, captured, or drove into the harbour, the whole line of defence to the southward of the Crown Islands. He says he was told that two British ships struck — why did he not take possession of them? I took possession of his as fast as they struck. He states that the ship in which I had the honour to hoist my flag fired latterly only single guns. It is true, for steady and cool were my brave fellows, and did not wish to throw away a single shot. He seems to exult that I sent on shore a flag of truce. You know, and his royal highness knows, that the guns fired from the shore could only fire through the Danish ships which had surrendered, and that if I fired at the shore it could only be in the same manner. God forbid I should destroy a non-resisting Dane! When they became my

Lindholm's Apology for Commodore Fischer.

prisoners, I became their protector. Humanity alone could be my object. His royal highness thought as I did. It has brought about an armistice, which, I pray the Almighty, may bring about a happy reconciliation between the two kingdoms !”

The adjutant-general replied with the utmost attention to the wounded feelings of the British admiral, yet protested against the severity with which he had treated the Danish commodore. He appealed to Lord Nelson's candour and indulgence to allow some observations in behalf of that officer, with whom, however, he had not had any communication. He confessed that it had been, and still was, his own opinion that the British division, or rather that part of it stationed to the southward of the Three Crowns Battery, was stronger than that portion of the Danish line. He represented that the Danish ships were old and rotten, badly officered, and manned for the greatest part by landsmen; that the British squadron was superior in number of guns and weight of metal, exclusively of the carronades, which did the Danish ships so much injury; and contended that, as the *Dannebrog* was on fire, it became the duty of the commodore to remove his broad pendant; and that, having received a wound in the head, he would have been justified if he had quitted the command altogether. He said that the man who had taken down the broad pendant and hoisted the captain's ensign was killed in coming down the shrouds, and fell upon the deck with the commodore's pendant in his hand. After urging further arguments in defence of his countryman, Lindholm thus concluded: “As to your lordship's motives for sending a flag of truce, they can never be misconstrued; and your subsequent conduct has sufficiently shown that humanity is always the companion of true valour: you have done more — you have shown yourself a friend to the re-establish-

Comparison of the British and Danish Force.

ment of peace and good harmony between this country and Britain." The general spirit and drift of this letter were so different from the commodore's, that Nelson would not cavil at the incorrectness of some of the assertions: but, in some private remarks which he made on it, he observed that Lindholm ought to have omitted the guns of the *Russell*, *Bellona*, *Agamemnon*, *Amazon*, *Alcmene*, *Blanche*, *Dart*, and *Arrow*: the first two were aground, and, although within random shot, yet unable to do that service which was expected of 74-gun ships; the *Agamemnon* was not within three miles; the frigates and sloops were exposed to a part of the Crown Battery and the ships in the other channel, but not fired upon by the eighteen sail drawn up to the southward of the Crown Islands. To these remarks he subjoined his statement of the real number of guns engaged on both sides, which gave 692 to the British force in action, and 800 to the Danes.

The news of this victory, which was a death-blow to the triple league of the northern powers, was received in England with a joy adequate to its importance; at the same time the patriotic courage of the Danes commanded admiration, and produced a deep feeling of regret at the necessity of inflicting so severe a calamity upon a brave nation. The thanks of both Houses of Parliament were voted to Sir Hyde Parker, Lord Nelson, Rear-admiral Graves, and the rest of the officers, seamen, and marines, by whom the victory had been achieved. In the House of Lords, Earl St. Vincent declared that "the conduct of the officers engaged in this expedition far surpassed any thing that was to be found in the glorious annals of the British navy;" and in the Commons, Mr. Addington, Chancellor of the Exchequer, observed that "Lord Nelson had shown himself as wise as he was brave, and proved that in the same person may be

Nelson is created Viscount.

united the talents of the warrior and the statesman." In about a month his lordship was elevated to the rank of Viscount of the United Kingdom, by the title of Viscount Nelson of the Nile, and of Burnham Thorpe, in the county of Norfolk.

Sir William Hamilton gave the conqueror an amusing account of the effect produced by the news of the victory on his particular friends in London. "You would have laughed," he says, "to have seen what I saw yesterday. Emma did not know whether she was on her head or her heels — in such a hurry to utter your great news, that she could utter nothing but tears of joy and tenderness. I went to Davison yesterday morning, and found him still in bed, having had a severe fit of the gout, and with your letter, which he had just received : and he cried like a child. But, what was very extraordinary, he assured me that, from the instant he had read your letter, all pain had left him; and that he felt himself able to get up and walk about. Your brother, Mrs. Nelson, and Horace, dined with us. Your brother was more extraordinary than ever. He would get up suddenly and cut a caper, rubbing his hands, every time that the thought of your fresh laurels came into his head. In short, except myself, all the company, which was considerable after dinner, were mad with joy. But I am sure that no one really rejoiced more at heart than I did. I have lived too long to have ecstasies. We can only repeat what we knew well and often said before — that Nelson, was, is, and to the last will ever be, the first."

On the conclusion of the armistice, Sir Hyde Parker proceeded to accomplish the rest of his instructions, leaving Nelson in the *St. George*, to follow, with the disabled ships, as soon as their damages could be repaired. The next immediate object of attack was the Russian fleet at Revel. Hearing,

The Fleet proceeds into the Baltic.

however, that a Swedish squadron was at sea, with the intention of forming a junction with the Russian fleet, Sir Hyde shaped his course toward the northern extremity of the island of Bornholm, where he was led to expect that he should meet with the Swedish squadron. They were actually there; but, on the approach of the British fleet, they crowded all the sail they could carry, and saved themselves behind the forts, which are situated on small islands that command all the entrances into Carlsrona.

Nelson, as soon as the business of refitting could be accomplished, proceeded with his squadron into the Baltic; their passage on the 18th of April through the narrow channel between the islands of Amak and Saltholm, called the Grounds, was attended with considerable difficulty. Most of the ships touched, and two or three ran aground. The *St. George* was left behind, as it was found necessary to put her guns on board an American ship, in order to lighten her sufficiently to enable her to pass over the Grounds; and the wind, proving foul, prevented her from moving. At six, the same evening, Lord Nelson received advice from the commander-in-chief that the Swedish squadron had been seen by the look-out frigates. The moment he had read this account, he ordered his gig to be manned, and, jumping into her, he put off after the fleet with all possible expedition. Such was his eagerness to join the squadron, that he set out without even waiting for a boat-cloak, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, and though he had to row twenty-four miles against the wind and current. His anxiety in the boat, for nearly six hours, lest the fleet should have sailed before he got on board, and lest it should not overtake the Swedish squadron, can only be conceived by those who have been fortunate enough to enjoy opportunities of personally observing the unbounded zeal of this truly

Nelson's anxiety to overtake the Fleet.

great man. The cold was excessive, and the master of the *Bellona*, whom he had ordered to accompany him, having a great coat along with him in the boat, requested his lordship to put it on. "I thank you very much," replied his lordship, "but, to tell you the truth, my anxiety at present keeps me sufficiently warm." "Do you think," said he, a moment afterwards to the same officer, "that our fleet has quitted Bornholm?—If it has," he continued, without waiting for a reply, "we shall follow them to Carls-crona in the boat, by God!" The idea of going the distance of fifty leagues in a small boat rowing six oars, without the least food or sustenance of any kind, shows how entirely every other earthly consideration was banished from his mind by the solicitude to serve his country. About midnight the boat reached the fleet, and his lordship went on board the *Elephant*, commanded by his old friend and companion, Captain Foley.

On the 19th the whole fleet was in full chace; and at noon nine Swedish men of war were descried, moored at the entrance of the harbour of Carls-crona. This position Admiral Parker determined to attack, but first despatched the *Dart* sloop, with a flag of truce to the Swedish admiral, acquainting him with the accommodation of the dispute with Denmark, and requesting to be informed of the line of conduct which the court of Sweden intended to adopt. The *Dart* returned in about three hours with a provisional answer from Vice-Admiral Cronstadt: and on the 28th his Swedish Majesty arrived at Carls-crona, and signified to the British commander-in-chief that, though he was resolved to adhere to the northern confederacy, he was, nevertheless, willing to listen to any equitable proposals that might be made by England for the adjustment of the existing differences.

Nelson appointed Commander-in-Chief.

Having assured himself of the pacific disposition of the Swedish monarch, Sir Hyde Parker was preparing to bear away for the Gulph of Finland, when a lugger arrived in the fleet under a press of sail from Copenhagen. She brought despatches from the Russian ambassador at that city to the admiral. They contained overtures from the Emperor Alexander, (who, after the assassination of his father, the eccentric Paul, had ascended the throne of Russia) of such an amicable and conciliatory nature, as to put an end to all the operations of the English squadron, which immediately returned to Kioge Bay, near Copenhagen. This measure was by no means approved by Nelson, who well knew that, in order to negotiate with effect, on critical occasions, force should always be at hand, and in a situation to act. Aware that the Russian fleet in the Baltic winters in two divisions at the great naval arsenals of Revel and Cronstadt, and that the ships in the former station are locked up some weeks longer by the ice than in the latter, he conceived that the British fleet ought to have placed itself between the two Russian squadrons so as to prevent the possibility of a junction, in case their pacific overtures should prove insincere. Time was again lost in waiting for fresh instructions from England, to the great chagrin of Nelson, whose mind, relying on its own resources, was always prepared to act on any emergency whatever.

On the 5th of May, Sir Hyde Parker was recalled, and his lordship was appointed to the chief command in the Baltic. Such was the precarious state of his health at this time, that he had determined on sailing for England in the *Blanche* frigate, on the very day that the news of his appointment arrived. The first signal which he made on assuming the chief command, to hoist in all launches and prepare to weigh, showed that a different system was about to be pur-

He sails to Revel.

sued. He immediately sent a flag of truce to the Swedish admiral at Carlsrona, informing him that he was not directed to abstain from hostilities in case he should meet with the Swedish fleet at sea. He then proceeded with nine sail of the line towards Revel, determined to ascertain the real disposition of Russia by entering one of her ports. On the passage, he took every opportunity of calling together the captains of his squadron, and arranging plans of conduct in case of finding the Russians friendly or hostile. To his great mortification, on his arrival off Revel, on the 12th of May, he learned that the squadron there had been enabled by the state of the ice to escape to Cronstadt only three days before. Though disappointed, Nelson was not disconcerted: the hostile visit was made to pass for one of honour and courtesy; the governor and forts were saluted; he was permitted to anchor in the outer port, and, an invitation from shore being readily accepted, he was entertained with every demonstration of respect by the governor, admiral, and other Russian officers at Revel. A letter which he had sent ashore having been forwarded to the emperor, great activity was exerted in providing the fleet with fresh meat and vegetables, and his lordship was meanwhile engaged in making observations and acquiring information concerning the harbour, mole, and anchorage. On the 16th an answer to his letter was received from St. Petersburg. It expressed surprise at the arrival of a British squadron in a Russian port, professed amicable intentions towards the English government, but declined the personal visit of the admiral at the capital, if accompanied by more than a single ship. The doubts of the motives avowed by him for visiting Revel, shown in this letter, nettled him not a little, and produced in his reply this spirited declaration, that "the word of a British admiral, when given in

Nelson's Reception at Rostock.

explanation of any part of his conduct, is as sacred as that of any sovereign in Europe." He concluded with expressing his determination to retire with his fleet from the Russian coast; and accordingly, though contracts were entered into for fresh provisions, he caused the squadron to weigh immediately, and to stand as far out to sea as was safe for that evening. At dawn of day he proceeded down the Baltic, and, when off the island of Bornholm, was joined by the squadron under Captain Murray. Having sent off a detachment of the fleet to Kioge Bay, and another to Dantzic, he sailed himself with a few ships to Rostock, for the purpose of procuring fresh provisions.

At Rostock the utmost respect was shown for the name of Nelson. Deputations were even sent from distant inland towns of Mecklenburg, with their public books of record, and a request that he would write his name in them with his own hand; and boats were constantly rowing round his flag-ship, the *St. George*, with persons of respectability, anxious to catch a glimpse of the hero of many battles. On the 26th May, the day after his arrival off Rostock, a Russian lugger brought a reply from Count Pahlen, the Russian minister for foreign affairs, to his letter written on leaving Revel. A more flattering communication was perhaps never made from a sovereign to the subject of another power than was conveyed in the minister's reply. It apologised for any misconception of his lordship's views in having entered Revel roads; expressed an anxious wish that peace should be restored on the most solid basis; and gave Lord Nelson an invitation to visit St. Petersburg in any manner most agreeable to himself. The lugger, on leaving the fleet with his lordship's answer to this gracious letter, fired a salute, an act which in the Russian service implies much more than in that of many other nations. Nelson's observation to an

His Remarks on the Russian Fleet.

officer near him was :—" Did you hear that little fellow salute ? Well, now there is peace with Russia, depend on it. Our jaunt to Revel was not so bad after all."

On the subject of this " jaunt to Revel," he had thus written to Earl St. Vincent, from Revel Bay :—" To your lordship, I shall confine myself to what we clearly could have done with our Baltic fleet, such as it was after the conclusion of the armistice with Denmark. I shall not say more of the Swedes, than we saw their force at Carlsrona, where they had wisely retired when they saw our frigates in the Baltic. On the 19th of April we had eighteen sail of the line and a fair wind. Count Pahlen came and resided at this place, evidently to endeavour to prevent any hostilities against the Russian fleet here, which was, I decidedly say, at our mercy. Nothing, if it had been right to make the attack, could have saved one ship of them in two hours after our entering the bay. . . . We now know the navigation, should circumstances call us here again. All the folks are thieves, and think us fair game." In transmitting to the Admiralty a plan of the Bay of Revel, drawn by the Hon. Colonel Stewart, he says :—" The fleet, when out of the mole, always moor on the east side of the bay ; the outer ship is supposed to be protected by the fort, which is marked : there are, it is true, a number of guns, but, as the officer who goes there is not to be supposed to mind guns, if he can get in and out again, in my opinion the Revel fleet, whether in or out of the mole, would be destroyed by a vigorous attack : and that it may, if the Russians again give us offence, is the sincere wish of your affectionate sick friend."

Nelson's health had been so severely affected during his stay in the Baltic, that he had earnestly solicited the appointment of a successor. It was far

Nelson solicits permission to return home.

from being improved by the news which he now received of the death of his elder brother, Maurice. "Six sons," he writes to Lord St. Vincent, "are gone out of eight, and if I do not get some repose very soon another will go." "Your lordship well knows," replied the earl, "that to find a proper successor is no easy task; for I never saw the man in our profession, excepting yourself and Troubridge, who possessed the magic art of infusing the same spirit into others which inspired their own actions; exclusive of other talents and habits of business not common to naval characters. But your complaint demands prompt decision. We have, therefore, fixed on Admiral Pole. Your lordship's whole conduct, from your first appointment to this hour, is the subject of our constant admiration. It does not become me to make comparisons. All agree there is but one Nelson."

Meanwhile, after lying some days off Rostock, where he was visited by the Duke of Mecklenburg Strelitz, brother to the queen of George III., his lordship had returned to Kioge Bay, to complete the water of the ships, which could not be done at Rostock, and to arrange the stations of the different squadrons which were kept constantly on the move. His principle was to keep all hands employed, and he used to say, "no matter how, and no matter where." The proceedings of the Danes during his absence excited his indignation. "I hope," he says, "the reply of the Admiralty to my letter of this day [June 14] will be clear and explicit, whether the commander-in-chief is at liberty to hold the language becoming a British admiral — which, very probably, if I am here, will break the armistice and set Copenhagen in a blaze The armistice, except their ships being actually hauled out, has been totally disregarded: ships have been masted, guns taken on

He resigns the Command.

board, floating batteries prepared; and, except hauling out and completing their rigging, every thing has been done in defiance of the treaty I have made no representations yet, as it would be useless to do so until I have the power of correction. All I beg, in the name of the future commander-in-chief, is that the orders may be clear; for enough is done to break twenty treaties, if it should be wished." Of the hostile feelings of the Danes he was so thoroughly persuaded that he says: "In this nation we shall not be forgiven our having the upper hand of them. I only thank God we have, or they would try and humble us to the dust."

The *St. George* made her last cruize with Lord Nelson's flag on board, between the 9th and 13th of June. On the latter day he received permission from the Admiralty to return to England, and directions from his majesty to invest rear-admiral Graves with the Order of the Bath. This ceremony was performed on the 14th, and a few days afterwards he resigned the chief command into the hands of Sir Charles M. Pole, who arrived in the *Æolus* frigate. Nelson's resignation was a subject of infinite regret to the whole fleet, throughout which it produced a complete depression of spirits. Before his departure, he issued a flattering circular addressed to the officers and men who had been serving under him, acknowledging the kindness and support which he had received from them, and concluding with this remarkable passage: "Lord Nelson cannot but observe, with the highest satisfaction which can fill the breast of a British admiral, that (with the exception of the glaring misconduct of the officers of the *Tigress* and *Cracker* gun-brigs, and the charges alleged against the lieutenant of *Terror* bomb), out of 18,000, of which the fleet is composed, not a complaint has been made of any officer or man in it; and he cannot but remark that

Nelson returns to England.

the extraordinary health of this fleet, under the blessing of Almighty God, is to be attributed to the great regularity, exact discipline, and cheerful obedience, of every individual in it. If it please God that the vice-admiral should recover his health, he will feel proud on some future day to go with them in pursuit of further glory, and to assist in making the name of our king and country beloved and respected by all the world."

On the 19th of June, his lordship sailed for England in the Kite brig, declining the use of a frigate, from his usual solicitude for the good of the service, which with him was superior to every consideration of personal convenience. Indeed, he at one time had the intention of traversing Jutland in his boat, by the canal from Frederickstadt to Tonningen on the Eyder, in order that he might not remove a single pendant from the station. On landing at Yarmouth, on the 1st of July, he immediately proceeded to the hospital to visit the brave men who had been wounded before Copenhagen. With that benevolence and humanity which uniformly marked his character, he inquired into the state of their health, soothed their sufferings, and relieved their necessities. When he left the town, the volunteer cavalry escorted him to Lowestoffe, a distance of nine miles, on his way to London, where he alighted at the residence of Sir William Hamilton, which, having now no home of his own, he had consented, before his departure for the Baltic, to make in future his abode.

That Nelson should have been beloved, nay, almost adored, by all under his command, is not surprising, when his attention to their comforts and his treatment of them are considered. On these points some interesting details are supplied by an eye-witness during his service in the Baltic. "The keeping his fleet continually on the alert, and thus amply fur-

Traits of Character and Habits.

nishing it with fresh water and provisions, were the objects of his lordship's unremitting care; and to this may, in a great measure, be ascribed the uniform good health and discipline which prevailed. Another point to which he gave nearly equal attention was his economy of the resources of his fleet in regard to stores: their consumption was as remarkable for its smallness as it was in the fleet that was afterwards under his command in the Mediterranean. His hour of rising was four or five o'clock, and of going to rest about ten. Breakfast was never later than six, and generally nearer to five o'clock. A midshipman or two were always of the party; and I have known him send during the middle watch to invite the little fellows to breakfast with him, when relieved. At table with them, he would enter into their boyish jokes, and be the most youthful of the party. At dinner, he invariably had every officer of his ship in their turn, and was both a polite and hospitable host. The whole ordinary business of the fleet was invariably despatched, as it had been by Earl St Vincent, before eight o'clock. The great command of time which Lord Nelson thus gave himself, and the alertness which this example imparted throughout the fleet, can only be understood by those who witnessed it, or who know the value of early hours." . . . "He was a decided enemy to any severe system of discipline, and never would consent to inflict corporal punishment on a man if it were possible to avoid it; when he was actually driven to it, he was more miserable during the execution of a sentence than the culprit himself. He understood mankind and could lead them where he pleased. No man was ever more faithfully obeyed, yet he knew not the use of terror. His hold was on the affection and reason of man, aided by example; and such a hold that he could by it inspire cowardice itself with courage and

Traits of Character and Habits.

enthusiasm. He never was known to do an unfriendly act to any officer about him : if they behaved ill and he was asked to prosecute them, he used to answer that 'there was no occasion for him to ruin a poor devil, who was sufficiently his own enemy to ruin himself.' Expulsion from the ship was the severest punishment he inflicted. He was literally what I have heard his sailors in their plain, expressive language say of him, 'Our NEL is as brave as a lion and as gentle as a lamb.'"

CHAPTER X.

1801 TO 1803.

NELSON IS APPOINTED TO A COMMAND IN THE CHANNEL — PREPARATIONS OF THE FRENCH FOR AN INVASION — ATTACK OF THEIR FLOTILLA AT BOULOGNE — NELSON'S ATTENTION TO HIS WOUNDED OFFICERS AND MEN — HIS DISSATISFACTION WITH THE TREATMENT OF THE ADMIRALTY — HE PURCHASES MERTON PLACE — CONCLUSION OF PEACE — NELSON REPAIRS TO MERTON — NEW HONOURS CONFERRED ON HIM — HIS REMONSTRANCES CONCERNING THE VICTORY OF COPENHAGEN — HIS PARLIAMENTARY CONDUCT — TOUR TO MILFORD HAVEN — HIS PLAN FOR MANNING THE NAVY — DEATH OF SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON.

THE first weeks after Nelson's arrival in London were passed in rural excursions with his brother William and his family, and Sir William and Lady Hamilton. Some days were spent by this party at Laleham, for the purpose of visiting the blind widow of his recently deceased brother Maurice; and, besides providing for her immediate exigencies, he generously made up the pittance left her by her husband to a regular annuity of £200.

At this time, Bonaparte, who with the title of First Consul had acquired supreme authority in France, was making immense preparations for the avowed purpose of invading England. Though the nature of the French armament, which consisted chiefly of gun-boats, might not seem to require the selection of the most distinguished officer of the British navy to oppose their design, ministers nevertheless intimated to his lordship that it was the general wish of the nation that he should undertake the defence of our southern coast, where an attack was most likely to

Nelson appointed to a Command in the Channel.

be attempted. Though he acknowledged that he felt his ability to render service in the new sort of command offered to him only in his zeal, he accepted it without hesitation. It embraced the whole coast of the Channel, from Orfordness to Beachey Head, but without interfering either with the command at the Nore or in the Downs. A squadron of sixteen frigates, together with all the gun-boats and small craft within that range, were placed under his orders; and on account of the loss of his arm he was allowed to have three aides-de-camp: the principal of these was the Hon. Colonel Stewart, who had accompanied him in the Baltic. The French had collected at Boulogne a considerable number of gun-boats and other small vessels, preparatory to the threatened invasion: and it was to this point that the attention of government had been chiefly directed in this appointment of Lord Nelson. The attack of an enemy in his own ports was perfectly familiar to his lordship; and ministers argued that, if any naval officer could make a successful attempt on the flotilla at Boulogne, it must be the hero who had just triumphed in the road of Copenhagen.

On his arrival at Deal, he hoisted his flag on board the *Medusa* frigate, Captain Gore, and proceeded, with Captain Fyers of the artillery, to reconnoitre Boulogne. They found a line of armed vessels lying outside the port, as if to add strength to the place. The French, apparently apprehending an attack, were erecting batteries both for guns and mortars on each side of the town; but they could not learn that there were more than fifty or sixty boats, large and small, at that place. It was ascertained that at proper times of tide these might be reached by our bomb-vessels. On the 4th of August several floating batteries and gun-boats were sunk by them. "Boulogne," says Nelson, "is certainly not a very pleasant

Bombardment of Boulogne.

place this morning; but it is not my wish to injure the poor inhabitants, and the town is spared as much as the nature of the service will admit." On the 7th he says: "I am sure that the French are trying to get from Boulogne; yet the least wind at w.n.w. and they are lost. I pronounce that no embarkation can take place at Boulogne; whenever it comes forth it will be from Flanders; and what a forlorn undertaking! Consider cross-tides, &c. As for rowing, that is impossible. It is perfectly right to be prepared against a mad government; but, with the active force your lordship has given me, I may pronounce it almost impracticable." The admiral proceeded to Harwich, to confer with Captains Schomberg and Edge on the subject of the Sea Fencibles, and from that port he wrote on the 10th to Earl St. Vincent, to this effect: "In truth, I have no desire for any thing else than to get at a proper time clear of my present command, in which I am sure of diminishing my little fortune, which at this moment does not reach £10,000, and never had I an idea of gaining money by accepting it. Do you still think of sending me to the Mediterranean? If not, I am ready to go for the spur of the occasion on the expedition which is in embryo, but to return the moment it is over; for I am afraid of my strength. I am always ready as far as I am able." He added that he should be at the Nore by sunset; and that Mr. Spence, the maritime surveyor, was going to take the Medusa out by a new channel. At the time this letter was written, the Medusa, having run in through the proper channel between the Ridge Shoal and the Andrews' Shoal, was anchored in the Rolling Ground off Harwich. Being a very large frigate, drawing 18 feet water, she had touched once or twice in her passage. When Mr. Spence came on board, Lord Nelson said: "We have got the Medusa into this hole, but cannot get out again

New Channel from Harwich to the Swin.

through the proper channel, whilst this wind lasts; and although I have two or three pilots on board, neither they nor the Harwich pilots will take charge of the ship in so dangerous a navigation; much less will they venture over the Naze, as they call it; but I must go to the Nore at all hazards in the frigate. I shall therefore esteem it a particular favour, if you would devise some means to get me out of this place into the Swin, by any possible way in your power, or through any channel; for I am in a great hurry." Spence had very minutely surveyed the back channel over the Naze, and engaged to carry the Medusa out that way, though he could not promise that there would be more than 22 or 23 feet at high water, and perhaps not so much, that tide; and even that would be through a very rocky and uneven channel for three or four miles. The largest vessel which had ever before ventured that way drew only 14 feet. The whole distance from the anchorage of the Medusa to the Swin was about eleven miles. Mr. Spence, however, declared that he was ready to run the risk. Accordingly, at the proper time of the tide, he got the frigate under sail, and ran her out over the Naze or back channel without any accident. This channel was afterwards named after the Medusa frigate, by Nelson's desire, in preference to his own name, as Mr. Spence had requested.

On reaching Sheerness, his lordship wrote to Earl St. Vincent. "Our active force," he says, "is perfect, and possesses so much zeal that I only wish to catch that Bonaparte on the water, either with the Amazon or Medusa; but himself he will never trust. He would say *Allez vous en!* and not *Allons, mes amis!* I hope these French, if they come this year, mean to do it before the 14th of September, beyond which I fear the season will be too much for me. I know not at this moment where I had best strike a blow,

Nelson's Dislike of his Command.

which I wish to be a very hard one." And again: "The account of troops given by the French scoundrels in our pay is as false as they are. I am certain that, in the town of Boulogne and on the surrounding hills, the total number could not exceed 2000 men. Captain Hawkins assures me that the boats collected at Ostend and Blackenburg may amount to 60 or 70; that he is sure they could not carry more than 50 or 60 men each; he understood that the poor devils of fishermen are sent off for Brest. Where, my dear lord, is our invasion to come from? The time is gone; owing to the precautions of government, it cannot happen at this moment; and I hope that we shall always be as much on the alert as our enemies."

Nelson began to feel a dislike of the service in which he was engaged. He was aware that he was not in his proper sphere. "I own," he says, "that this boat warfare is not exactly congenial to my feelings, and I find I get laughed at for my puny mode of attack. . . . I have all night had a fever, which is very little abated this morning: my mind carries me beyond my strength and will do me up; but such is my nature. I have serious doubts whether I shall be able, from my present feelings, to go to the Mediterranean; but I will do what I can. I require nursing like a child." In this letter he acquainted the first lord of the Admiralty that he purposed, if it could be done, to take all the French gun-vessels lying outside the pier of Boulogne. This plan was carried into execution on the night of the 15th of August. Four divisions of boats for boarding were placed under the command of Captains Somerville, Parker, Cotgrave, and Jones, and a division of howitzer boats under Captain Conn, of the *Discovery*. At half-past eleven, the boats put off from the *Medusa* in the best possible order, but, owing to the darkness, and the tide and half tide, which must

Attack of the French Flotilla at Boulogne.

always make night attacks on the coasts of the Channel very uncertain, the divisions separated and did not arrive together. Each of them, however, excepting the fourth, which could not get up before daylight, made a vigorous attack on that part of the enemy's flotilla which they fell in with, and actually took possession of many brigs and flats, and among others the commodore. But, being protected by strong netting, the assailants suffered severely; and the captured vessels being either chained to the shore or hauled on shore, none of them could be brought off or destroyed; for, the moment the firing on board them ceased, such volleys upon volleys of musketry were directed upon their decks from the shore, the enemy being absolutely regardless of the lives of their own men, who must have suffered as severely as our's, that it was impossible to remain on board to burn them. Nelson, however, attested that more determined persevering courage he had never witnessed than in this affair, in which 44 officers and men were killed, and 128 wounded. The admiral's aid-de-camp, Captain Parker, had his thigh much shattered, and his flag-lieutenant, Frederick Langford, was shot through the leg in attempting to board the French commodore.

Deeply did he commiserate the sufferings of the brave men who were now stretched on the bed of pain by dangerous wounds. Writing on the second day after the action to Earl St. Vincent, he says:—
“ I shall never bring myself again to allow any attack to go forward, where I am not personally concerned; my mind suffers much more than if I had a leg shot off in this late business. I am writing between poor Parker and Langford; therefore I must beg great indulgencies; only believe that I will do my utmost. I am ready to assist the good cause, and have no other view in my mind. Had our force arrived, as

Death of Captain Parker.

I intended, 'twas not all the chains in France that could have prevented our folks from bringing off the whole of the vessels." At the hospital, indeed, he was a constant attendant, as it had ever been his practice; inquiring into the state of the wounded, and offering the best consolation that he could. On perceiving one brave fellow whom he recollected, and asking what injury he had received, his lordship was informed that he had lost his arm. "Never mind," said Nelson, "I have lost an arm, and perhaps I may shortly lose a leg too—but, my good fellow, they can never be lost in a better cause than in defence of our country." Of Captain Somerville he wrote, "I felt much at sending an officer who has a wife and eight children dependent on his life: although he has not reported himself injured, yet I fear he has suffered in his head by the bow gun of a brig that was fired over him."

But it was the fate of Captain Parker that Nelson most particularly lamented. For some time, hopes were entertained that not only his life but his limb might be saved; but these were disappointed. After suffering amputation very high in the thigh, one of the arteries burst, and, after languishing a few days, he expired. "Dear Parker is my child," wrote Lord Nelson to Dr. Baird who attended him, "for I found him in distress. I am prepared for the worst, although I still hope. I would come on shore and nurse him could I be useful. Say every thing that is kind for me to his father, and, if my Parker has still his recollection, say God bless him!" When informed of his decease, his lordship thus wrote to the same physician; "You will judge of my feelings. God's will be done! I beg that his hair may be cut off and given to me; it shall be buried in my grave. Poor Mr. Parker! what a son has he lost! If I was to say I was content, I should lie; but I shall endea-

Meditated Attack on Flushing abandoned.

your to submit with all the fortitude in my power." And to Lord St. Vincent he wrote: "I fear his loss has made a wound in my heart which time will scarcely heal; but God is good, and we must all die."

The disastrous affair at Boulogne was magnified by the French into a splendid victory on their part, won in sight of both countries; and rear-admiral Latouche Trévillé, who commanded the naval force at that place, stated, in his official account, that, expecting the attack, he had embarked battalions of three regiments on board the flotilla, and been apprized of the approach of the assailants by boats stationed for that purpose. Even before this attempt, Nelson had projected an attack upon Flushing; but, from all the information which he could gain, and the observations which he himself made in reconnoitring the channel leading up to the town, he did not think himself justified in proceeding with the business. The enemy there had been expecting him: their ships, whether lying below or abreast of the town, could quit their anchorage at any moment and take shelter within the Dog Sand, where they were safe from attack; and, from the few vessels which they had in the port, the result, however successful, would have been wholly inadequate to the hazard that must have been incurred. His lordship, in consequence, returned with his squadron to the Downs.

Having satisfied himself that he could not reach the enemy in their own harbours, and, being convinced that they would not venture out of them, Nelson felt more than ever displeased with the duty allotted to him. Remonstrating with the first lord of the Admiralty, he says: "You know with what cheerfulness I came here, and the country, as your lordship and Mr. Addington thought, attached a confidence to my

Nelson wishes to resign his Command.

name which I submitted to, although I was conscious that many more able officers could be found every day in London; but my zeal I will never give up to any man breathing. This boat business must be over: it may be a part of a great plan of invasion, but it can never be the only one: therefore, as our ships cannot act any more in lying off the French coast, I own I do not think it is now a command for a vice-admiral. It is not that I want to get a more lucrative situation — far from it. I do not know, if the Mediterranean were vacant to-morrow, that I am equal to undertake it. From my heart," he adds, "I wish the enemy would try and come over and finish the war; although, without great care, I see the misery of peace." To Lady Hamilton he says, about the same time: "You ask me if I am going on more expeditions. And even if I was to forfeit your friendship, which is dearer to me than all the world, I can tell you nothing. For I go out; if I see the enemy and can get at them, it is my duty: and you would naturally hate me if I kept back one moment. I long to pay them for their tricks t'other day the debt of a drubbing, which surely I'll pay; but when, where, or how, it is impossible for me or mortal man to say."

While his lordship held this command, the mayor and corporation of Sandwich waited on him to present him with the freedom of their town, and gave him an invitation to dinner, which he put off. "This business," he says, "dreadful to me, stands over, and I shall be attacked again when I get to the Downs. Oh!" he adds, "how I hate to be stared at!" The same feeling was whimsically expressed on another occasion, while on board the *Medusa*, in the Downs. "The devils here," he says, "wanted to plague my soul out just after dinner: but I would have seen them damned before they should have come

Nelson complains of the treatment of the Admiralty.

in. The Countess Mountmorris, lady this, that, and t'other, came alongside — a Mr. Lubbock with them — to desire they might come in. I sent word I was so busy that no person could be admitted, as my time was employed in the king's service. Then they sent in their names, which I cared not for, and sent Captain Gore to say it was impossible, and that, if they wanted to see a ship, they had better go to the Overysse, [a 64 then in the Downs.] They said no; they wanted to see me. However, I was stout, and will not be shown about like a *beast* — and away they went."

The few weeks during which Nelson held this command on the south coast were exceedingly embittered by the treatment which he experienced from the Admiralty, and which he felt the more keenly as proceeding from its head, his old commander-in-chief, and his friend Troubridge, then a member of the Board. He solicited permission to come to town for his own affairs, "for," said he, "every one knows I left it without a thought for myself." This was not granted. He was, on the contrary, kept on board the *Medusa*, in the Downs, in very bad weather, which, in addition to his other bodily ailments, always had the effect of producing sea-sickness, which in this instance was so severe that, to use his own expression, he could not hold up his head. Of Troubridge, whom he calls 'one of his lords and masters,' he says: "Troubridge has so completely prevented my ever mentioning any body's service that I am become a cipher, and he has gained a victory over Nelson's spirit. I am kept here, for what he may be able to tell — I cannot: but long it cannot, shall not, be." He also suffered much from a cold, which, after painfully affecting his head and teeth, settled, he says, in his bowels. "I wish," he adds, "the Admiralty had my complaint: but they have no

Merton Place purchased for him.

bowels, at least, for me." Again he says: "I have a letter from Troubridge, recommending me to wear flannel shirts. Does he care for me? No; but never mind. They shall work hard to get me back again."—"I dare say Master Troubridge is grown fat. I know I am grown lean with my complaint: which, but for their indifference about my health, would never have happened; or, at least, I should have got well long ago in a warm room, with a good fire, and sincere friends. . . . I am literally starving with cold; but my heart is warm. . . . I never shall get warm again, I believe. I cannot feel the pen" And again: "This is the coldest place in England, most assuredly. Troubridge writes me that, as the weather is set in fine again, he hopes I shall get *walks* on shore. He is, I suppose, laughing at me; but never mind."

Meanwhile, his friends, Sir William and Lady Hamilton, had, by his direction, sought out a rural retreat, where he might enjoy the benefit of good air, and yet be "within hail of the Admiralty," and which should be suitable for their joint establishment. Merton Place, in the village of Merton, about eight miles from the metropolis, was the spot selected for this purpose. The house and a farm of 115 acres adjoining were purchased for him at an expence of £8000; and his friends lost no time in preparing it for his reception. He was delighted with the accounts of it furnished from time to time by Lady Hamilton in her correspondence with him, and indulged in the most pleasing anticipations of the happiness he should find there. "You may rely upon one thing," he says, "that I shall like Merton; therefore, do not be uneasy on that account. I have that opinion of your taste and judgment that I do not believe it can fail in pleasing me. We must only consider our means, and for the rest I am sure you will soon make

Conclusion of Peace.

it the prettiest place in the world To be sure, we shall employ the tradespeople of our village, in preference to any others, in what we want for common use, and give them every encouragement to be kind and attentive to us Have we a nice church at Merton? We will set an example of goodness to the under-parishioners I admire the pigs and poultry. Sheep are certainly most beneficial to eat off the grass. Do *you* get paid for them; and take care that they are kept on the premises all night, for that is the time they do good to the land. They should be folded. Is your head man a good person, and true to our interest? I intend to have a farming book No person there can take amiss our not visiting. The answer from me will always be very civil thanks, but that I wish to live retired."

Nelson, in devising further means of annoying the enemy in Boulogne, now prepared to run a fire-brig into the harbour, and, in case that plan should fail, to make an infernal of one of the bombs, to have fire-boats, in short—"to keep the French for ever in hot water. My mind," he continues, addressing Lord St. Vincent, "is always at work; but I can assure you I am seriously indisposed and low-spirited from private considerations. My public duty is nothing; I could get over five times as much, were I in good health." All further hostile operations were at this moment suspended by the arrival of General Lauriston in London, with the ratification of the preliminaries of peace, which had been signed with France. The manner in which the mob received this French officer roused the indignation of Nelson. "Can you cure madness?" he asked, in writing to Dr. Baird—"for I am mad to read that Englishmen dragged a Frenchman's carriage. I am ashamed for my country." To his friend Davison, he observed: "England called

Nelson retires to Merton.

loudly for peace, and now, I see, it is to be abused ; but Englishmen never are satisfied, full nor fasting." Congratulating Lord St. Vincent on being a member of that administration, which had thus been able to comply with the almost unanimous wishes of the country, he added : " All hands must now try to keep French men and French principles out of our happy country."

It was not till the 22^d of October, that his lordship could obtain a release from his unpleasant command, which, however, he did not quit without paying a tribute of merit, which is doubly expressive of the kindness of his nature. Dr. Baird had been physician of the fleet which Nelson accompanied to the Baltic in the early part of the year : and the brave officers and men wounded at Boulogne were under the care of the same distinguished medical officer. For his attention on this occasion, his lordship presented him with what he called " a little remembrance," in the shape of a silver vase, the inscription on which records that it was — " Presented to Andrew Baird, Esq., M.D., as a mark of esteem for his humane attention to the gallant officers and men who were wounded off Boulogne on the 16th August, 1801, from their commander-in-chief Lord Viscount Nelson, Duke of Bronte."

Having landed at Deal, he set off post for his new residence at Merton. On arriving at this straggling village, the postboy inquired which was the house, to which his lordship could only reply that he knew no more than himself. It was, however, soon found, and never did man express more delight than he did on beholding this retreat, which surpassed the idea he had formed of it. " Is this too mine ?" he frequently exclaimed, as he was shown the different parts of the estate ; and, at length, when he had seen the whole, seizing the hand of his friend — " Oh,

Extension of the Honours conferred on him.

Sir William!" he cried, "the longest liver shall possess it all!"

When Nelson accepted the command in the Channel, which proved so disagreeable to himself, he had, at the suggestion of his friends, stipulated with ministers for an extension of the honours conferred on him, which had been hitherto limited to his own descendants. Accordingly, during his absence, it had been officially announced that "in consideration of the great and important services that renowned man, Horatio Viscount Nelson, hath rendered to his king and country, and in order to perpetuate to the latest posterity the remembrance of his glorious actions and to incite others to imitate his example," his majesty had been graciously pleased to grant to him the dignity of a Baron of the United Kingdom, by the title of Baron Nelson of the Nile, and of Hilborough, in the county of Norfolk; with remainder to his father, the Rev. Edmund Nelson and his heirs male, and to the heirs male of his sisters, Mrs. Bolton and Mrs. Matcham. It was, moreover, declared to be his majesty's royal will and pleasure that all persons who should thereafter succeed to this title should take and use the surname of Nelson only. Soon afterwards appeared a notice that his majesty had granted his lordship permission to accept the title of Duke of Bronte and the fief attached to it, and also the great cross of the order of St. Ferdinand and Merit, conferred on him by the king of the Two Sicilies.

One of Nelson's first cares in his retirement was to seek a reconciliation with his father, whose anger, on account of his separation from his lady, is said to have been studiously kept alive by slander and misrepresentation. At the pressing invitation of his duteous son, the venerable parent visited him at Merton Place, and the meeting produced a thorough

Nelson remonstrates with the Lord Mayor.

conviction of the falsehood of the statements which had given him so much pain. With this impression he exclaimed: "Merton is the mansion of peace, and I must become one of its inhabitants. Sir William and myself are both old men, and we will witness the hero's felicity in retirement." At parting, it was agreed that, after passing the winter, as usual, at Bath, he should in the spring come to reside wholly at Merton Place, where apartments were accordingly prepared for his reception.

In the month of November, the thanks voted by the city of London to the army and navy which had brought the campaign in Egypt to a glorious conclusion, drew from Nelson an equally just and spirited remonstrance, addressed to the lord mayor, on the silence which had been observed in regard to the victory of Copenhagen. "From my own experience," he says, "I have never failed seeing that the smallest services rendered by either army or navy to the country have been always noticed by the great city of London, with one exception—I mean the glorious 2^d of April, a day when the greatest dangers of navigation were overcome, and the Danish force, which they thought impregnable, totally taken or destroyed by the consummate skill of our commanders, and by the undaunted bravery of as gallant a band as ever defended the rights of this country. For myself, I can assure you, that if I were only personally concerned, I should bear the stigma attempted to be now first placed on my brow with humility." He disclaimed for himself more merit than naturally falls to a successful commander; but, in regard to the officers and men whom he that day commanded, he declared that "never was the glory of the country upheld with more determined bravery than on that occasion;" and he added, "if I may be allowed to give my opinion as a Briton, then I say that more

The Victory of Copenhagen not duly acknowledged.

important service was never rendered to our king and country. It is my duty to prove to the brave fellows, my companions in danger, that I have not failed in every proper place to represent as well as I am able their bravery and meritorious conduct." On this subject he afterwards wrote to his friend Davison: "The city of London has never yet failed noticing sea victories, and I trust, as the first commercial city in the world, it never will. I remember, a few years back, on my observing to a lord mayor that, if the city continued its generosity, we should ruin them by their gifts, his lordship put his hand on my shoulder and said, 'Do you find victories, and we will find rewards.' I have kept my word, and have since found two complete victories. I have a fair and honourable claim; my part of the contract has been now doubly fulfilled."

But Nelson was still more deeply stung by the slight thrown upon this important service in a quarter where its just value should have been better appreciated. No medal was given by the king for the achievement of the 2^d of April, as for preceding naval victories. On this point he had thus expressed himself to Lord St. Vincent: "I long to have the medal, which I would not give up to be made an English Duke." Nor did he fail to urge this subject on the attention of Lord Melville, the Earl's successor at the Admiralty:—"It is," he says, "to redeem the solemn pledge I have made, never to omit, upon any change of administration, stating the just claim which I consider the battle of Copenhagen has to the reward of medals, such as have been given for other great naval victories: I therefore enclose for your lordship's perusal a statement of facts and the letters which have passed between me and Earl St. Vincent upon that occasion. . . . I am aware that his majesty has the most undisputed right to

Nelson's Conduct in Parliament.

bestow medals or to withhold them, as he pleases. No man admits it more fully than myself; but I turn back to the 1st of June, 1794. From that moment I have ever considered that his majesty, by implication, pronounced these words to his fleet, holding forth the medal—'This, my fleet, is the great reward which I will bestow for great and important victories like the present.' Considering this as a solemn pledge, his majesty gave it as a reward for the battles of St. Vincent, of Camperdown, and the Nile. Then comes the most difficult achievement, the hardest fought battle, the most glorious result, that ever graced the naval annals of our country. The medal is withheld, for what reason Lord St. Vincent best knows." Certainly, no reason has been assigned for this invidious exception; and, if it originated in the motive to which Nelson evidently points—jealousy in his old friend and patron—we can only lament that a passion so mean should have been united with so much that was noble and exalted.

During the ensuing winter, Lord Nelson took frequent occasion to express his sentiments in the House of Peers. His natural modesty prevented him from taking part in many of the discussions; but, when he did speak, what he said was so much to the purpose, and delivered with such energy and ability, as to command the attention of all who heard him. No considerations of private friendship could induce him to unite in any systematic opposition to his majesty's ministers. He was the king's servant, he said, and he would in every way defend him with his best abilities. He regarded what was universally deemed "the honest" administration of Mr. Addington as entitled to his support, and the minister appeared to consider him as a coadjutor well worth cherishing. When the first lord of the Admiralty moved the thanks of the House to Rear-admiral Sir James Saumarez,

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for his spirited conduct in the action with the united fleet of France and Spain off Algeiras, Nelson, with his characteristic solicitude to do justice to the merits of a brother officer, seconded the motion. "I have the honour," said his lordship, "to be the friend of Sir James Saumarez, and I will assert that a greater action was never fought. Before that action, Sir James undertook an enterprize which none but the most gallant officer and the bravest seaman would have attempted. He failed through the falling of the wind; for I will venture to say, if that had not failed him, he would have captured the French fleet. The promptness with which he refitted, the spirit with which he attacked a superior force after his recent disaster, and the masterly conduct of the whole action, were not, I think, ever surpassed."

On the 3^d of November, when the preliminaries of peace with France were taken into consideration, and ministers were censured for consenting to give up Malta, the noble admiral made some observations relative to the importance of that island. He said, that when he was sent down the Mediterranean, Malta was in the hands of the French, and on his return from Aboukir it was his first object to blockade the island, because he deemed it an invaluable service to rescue it from their possession. In any other view it was not of much consequence, being at too great a distance from Toulon to watch the enemy's fleet from that port in time of war. In peace it would require a garrison of 7000 men, in war of twice that number, without being of any real utility. The Cape of Good Hope would be equally detrimental if retained by Great Britain: and though it certainly ought not to be given up to the French, this cession would be preferable to keeping it. Though the war had been long, he believed his Majesty had seized the first opportunity of making peace,

Death of his Father.

and he was satisfied it was the best that existing circumstances admitted.

A few days afterwards, on the 12th of November, when Lord Hobart rose to move the thanks of the house to the naval officers and seamen who had co-operated in the conquest of Egypt, Lord Nelson in seconding him observed, that the service of Egypt was of a double nature, yet of equal importance; it fell to the lot of the army to fight, and of the navy to labour:—they had equally performed their duty, and were equally entitled to thanks.

Nelson had not passed many months at Merton before his mind received a grievous shock by the decease of his excellent father at Bath, on the 26th of April, 1802, in the 79th year of his age. In order to recruit his health and spirits, he accepted, in the month of July, the pressing invitation of Sir William Hamilton to accompany him into Wales, for the purpose of viewing Milford Haven, and the improvements made on Sir William's estate at Milford, where, in compliment to his heroic friend, he had determined to establish a fair, or annual festival, on the 1st of August. Lady Hamilton, and his lordship's brother, the Rev. Dr. Nelson, with his wife and son, were of the party. The enthusiasm with which they were every where greeted, excepting in one single instance, rendered this tour a continued triumphal procession. At Oxford his lordship was presented with the freedom of the city, and the University complimented him and Sir William Hamilton with the degree of LL.D. The party then proceeded to Woodstock, for the purpose of inspecting Blenheim, the magnificent palace raised by the nation for the great Duke of Marlborough. It might have been expected that the descendant of that military commander would have felt proud to entertain one who had rivalled his deeds, if not surpassed them upon the

Toar to Milford Haven.

ocean. The duke, though at home, never made his appearance, but a servant was ordered to offer refreshments, which Nelson proudly refused. Sir William Hamilton indignantly observed, that if the great Marlborough could have risen from the tomb, he would have been eager to do the honours of his house to the victor of Aboukir, a greater victor than himself. Lady Hamilton, with a spirit, energy, and shrewdness of observation characteristic of her superior mind, remarked that, if Marlborough's services obtained so splendid a reward, it was because a woman reigned, and women have great souls. "And I," she continued — for these are her own words — "told Nelson that, if I had been a queen, after the battle of Aboukir, he should have had such a principality that Blenheim Park should have been only as a kitchen-garden to it. The tears came into his eyes; and he shook Sir William and me by the hand, saying that he was content to have done his duty by the country and the people that he loved; but that he had not yet half done, for there were two or three beds of laurels in the Mediterranean to be gathered." Contrast this reception at the ducal Blenheim with the homely but affecting tribute paid to the hero by a deputation of the farmers of Brecon. "My lord," said they, "you have saved us. While you was losing your limbs and shedding your blood for us, we slept soundly with our wives; and our lands and our children were protected by your brave vigilance. Accept our thanks — these tears will tell you what we feel!" — And the men wept like children. One of them exclaimed: "Now I could die in peace; I have seen our saviour and brave defender!"

In their way to Milford, the party passed through Gloucester and Monmouth; they afterwards visited Swansea, Hereford, Ludlow, Worcester, Birmingham, Warwick, and Coventry. The freedom of

Tour to Milford Haven.

Monmouth, and of the cities of Hereford and Worcester, was presented to his lordship in the most complimentary manner; that of Hereford enclosed in a box cut from the apple-tree, "the pride of the county"—observed the town-clerk in his address—"and of whose noble juice many libations will not fail to be offered to the long health, prosperity, and happiness, of the great and glorious conqueror of the Nile." Nelson concluded the speech which he made in reply with these emphatic words: "Should this nation ever experience a state similar to that from which it has been recently extricated, I have not the slightest doubt, from the result of my observations during this tour, that the native, the inbred, spirit of Britons is fully adequate to repel any attack, either abroad or at home, which our enemies may dare to make. You have but to say to your fleets and armies: 'Go ye forth and fight our battles; whilst we, true to ourselves, protect and support your wives and little ones at home.'" The impression made by this speech is not to be described.

From this tour, which proved eminently beneficial to his lordship, not only re-establishing his health but cheering his spirits, he returned on the 5th of September to Merton. Here his time was principally occupied in his little farm, and in directing the alterations which he had projected. He also amused himself with angling in the river Wandle, having been a good fly-fisher in his early days. Not unfrequently he assisted, with his single hand, in planting shrubs and trees for the embellishment of the gardens. Fond of retirement, he visited very few of his opulent neighbours; but there was scarcely a poor inhabitant of Merton whose house he did not occasionally enter, conversing familiarly with the humble inmates, taking the kindest notice of their children, and bountifully relieving their necessities.

Inquiry into Naval Abuses.

Writing to Mr. Davison in October, he said: "I am really so little in the world that I know of nothing beyond a newspaper. I own myself selfish enough to wish you in St. James's Square: for, at your breakfast, I heard all that was going on in the great world, and it was a central place where any one could meet me. I have seen Mr. Addington and Lord St. Vincent several times; but our conversations were like Swift's and Lord Oxford's. Yet it was not difficult to discover that we felt our importance in the scale of Europe degraded, if Bonaparte were allowed to act as he has lately done; and that it was necessary for us to speak a dignified language."

When, in December, 1802, the noble lord at the head of the Admiralty projected the plan for the correction of abuses committed by certain boards employed in the naval department of the public service, and by prize-agents, Lord Nelson stood forth the zealous supporter of the measure. On the second reading of the bill for appointing commissioners to inquire into these abuses, his lordship, with that solicitude for the interests of his profession which ever marked his character and endeared him to every seaman, made an animated speech, in which he said: "I can affirm that the necessities, the wrongs, of those who are employed in the naval service of their country most loudly call for the redress which this bill proposes. From the highest admiral in the service to the poorest cabin-boy that walks the street, there is not a man but may be in distress, with large sums of wages due to him, of which he shall by no diligence of request be able to obtain payment: not a man whose intreaties will be readily answered with aught but insult at the proper places for his application, if he come not with particular recommendations to a preference. From the highest admiral to the meanest seaman, whatever may be the sum of

Nelson's Plan for Manning the Navy.

prize-money due to him, no man can tell when he may securely call any part of it his own. A man may have forty thousand pounds due to him in prize-money, and yet may be dismissed without a shilling, if he ask for it at the proper office, without particular recommendations. Are these things to be tolerated? Is it for the interest, is it for the honour, of the country that they should not be as speedily as possible redressed?" On the third reading of the bill, on the following day, his lordship expressed his desire that the necessary inquiries into the flagrant abuses by prize-agents might be made the subject of a separate Act; observing, at the same time, that there might be instances in which the delay of payment arose from unavoidable accidents.

During the following winter, Nelson drew up some remarks on manning the navy in a more efficacious and popular manner than that which has been so long pursued, and submitted them to Earl St. Vincent. In the first place, he proposed that certificates should be granted to the seamen, and that these certificates should be registered. He calculated that during the preceding war 42,000 seamen, seduced by the higher wages paid in the merchant service, had deserted, causing a loss to the nation of £840,000, reckoning the expence of raising seamen at £20 per man. To remedy this evil, he proposed that every seaman, having served faithfully five years in war, and never been concerned in mutinies or deserted, should be paid every new year's day or on the king's birthday the sum of two guineas; and if he had served eight years, four guineas; exclusively of any pension for wounds. "This," he says, "may appear, at first sight, to be an enormous sum for the State to pay; but, when it is considered that the average life of a seaman is, from hard service, finished at 45 years, he cannot many years enjoy the annuity; to assist in

Death of Sir William Hamilton.

paying which the interest of the money saved by their not deserting would go very far."

Towards the end of March, 1803, Sir William Hamilton was seized with an indisposition, which he immediately pronounced to be the forerunner of his dissolution. He insisted on being removed to his house in Piccadilly from Merton Place, lest by dying there he should render it an unpleasant abode to his illustrious friend. On his arrival in town, he annexed the following remarkable codicil to his will: "The copy of Madame le Brun's picture of Emma, in enamel, by Bone, I give to my dearest friend, Lord Nelson, Duke of Bronte—a small token of the great regard I have for his lordship; the most virtuous, loyal, and truly brave character I have ever met with. God bless him! and shame fall on all those who do not say Amen!" Nelson, as soon as he learned the unfavourable opinion of the physicians, followed Sir William to town, and sat up with him for six nights, till on the 6th of April he expired in the arms of his lady, and with Nelson's hand grasped in his. A few moments before he expired, he said to his lordship: "Brave and great Nelson, our friendship has been long, and I glory in my friend. I hope you will see justice done to Emma by ministers; for you know how great her services have been and what she has done for her country. Protect my dear wife; and may God bless you, and give you victory, and defend you in battle!" Then turning to his lady—"My incomparable Emma," said he, "you have never in thought, word, or deed, offended me; and let me thank you, again and again, for your affectionate kindness to me during the whole of our ten years' happy union." At Sir William's death, his pension of £1200 a year ceased; and, though he was the foster-brother of King George III.; though he had for thirty-six

Death of Sir William Hamilton.

years filled the post of British minister at the court of Naples with zeal and ability, and with a splendid hospitality rarely exercised; though the claims of his widow to public remuneration were enforced by Nelson and allowed by Mr. Addington to be just — this acknowledgment was all that could be obtained. In the month of May, however, Nelson directed his friend and agent, Mr. Davison, to pay to Lady Hamilton a sum equal to the pension of her late husband, in monthly instalments of £100.

Nelson appointed to the Mediterranean Command.

CHAPTER XI.

FROM 1803 TO 1805.

NELSON APPOINTED COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN THE MEDITERRANEAN ON THE RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES WITH FRANCE — HE WATCHES THE PORT OF TOULON — STATE OF SARDINIA — NELSON'S SENTIMENTS RESPECTING PATRONAGE — HIS ATTENTION TO YOUNG OFFICERS — HIS REGARD FOR DISCIPLINE — HIS ATTACHMENT TO MERTON — HIS ADOPTED DAUGHTER — HIS OPINIONS OF BONAPARTE — HIS ANXIETY TO ENCOUNTER THE FRENCH FLEET — CAPTURE OF THE SWIFT CUTTER WITH DESPATCHES — ALTERCATION WITH ARTILLERY OFFICERS — EXPLOIT OF LATOUCHE TREVILLE, AND HIS LYING LETTER — NELSON DECLINES THE THANKS OF THE CITY OF LONDON — HIS SPECULATIONS ON THE DESTINATION OF THE TOULON FLEET — CONDUCT OF SPAIN TOWARDS GREAT BRITAIN — SAILING OF THE TOULON FLEET — NELSON GOES TO EGYPT IN QUEST OF THEM — THEY RETURN TO PORT — ADMIRAL VILLENEUVE AGAIN LEAVES TOULON — NELSON PURSUES THE ENEMY TO THE WEST INDIES — DRIVES THEM BACK TO EUROPE — SIR ROBERT CALDER'S ACTION OFF FERROL — NELSON RETURNS TO ENGLAND.

EARLY in the spring of 1803, the ambition and arrogance of Bonaparte, who, under the title of First Consul, had become the virtual sovereign of France, left to the British government no other prospect than a new appeal to arms. In this state of things, Nelson was selected as the officer best qualified for the command in the Mediterranean; and he acquainted the Duke of Clarence with his appointment on the very day that Sir William Hamilton died. On the 16th of May, his majesty, in a message to both houses of parliament, apprized them of the necessity of a renewal of hostilities with France; and on the 18th

He watches the port of Toulon.

Nelson arrived at Portsmouth, and hoisted his flag on board the *Victory*, of 110 guns. On the 20th he sailed for the Mediterranean, accompanied by the *Amphion* frigate, Captain T. M. Hardy, and proceeded by way of Malta and Naples in quest of the Mediterranean fleet, which he joined on the 8th of July, off Toulon. He wrote to Lady Hamilton that when in sight of Mount Vesuvius he was so painfully reminded of his dear friend, Sir William, that he had nearly fainted.

It was now his irksome task to watch the motions of an enemy, whom the dread of his name deterred from venturing out of their own ports. He disdained, however, any strict blockade, but left sufficient sea-room to induce their fleet to come out, hoping that they might thus be encouraged to send off, at least, some small detachment, which he had no doubt some of his brave officers would pick up. Meanwhile, he kept continually cruising about, as the best means of preserving the health of his men, which was always a primary object of his care.* His attention was at the same time directed to the security of Sardinia and Sicily; for the French had already taken possession of several points of the kingdom of Naples, where they had a force of 13,000 men. In order to counteract the operations of the enemy, he had himself proposed to government to keep 10,000 disposable troops in the Mediterranean, with a sufficient quantity of provisioned transports to convey them from one part of the coast to another, to harass and perplex the French armies.

Before he joined the fleet, his lordship addressed to Mr. Addington a view of the Mediterranean States, in which he declared that he considered Malta as a

* Many instances of this are on record, and no man was better acquainted with the characteristic feelings of a seaman than Nelson, for they were equally natural to himself under every circumstance in which he was placed.—THE OLD SAILOR.

State of the Mediterranean Islands.

most important outwork to India, and as giving us great influence in the Levant and indeed throughout all the southern parts of Italy, for which reason he hoped that we should never give it up. The state of Sicily he described as being almost as bad as a civilized country could be. There were few troops fit to be called such, with a scarcity of corn never known before, and, of course, bread so dear that the lower class were discontented. "The nobles," he added, "are oppressors, and those of the middle rank wish for a change; and, although they would prefer us to the French, yet I believe they would receive the French rather than not change from the oppression of the nobles." He conceived that the object of the enemy in collecting forces in Italy was for the conquest of Naples, perhaps of Sicily, and finally to possess themselves of the Morea. Every state in Italy, he said, except Naples, was at that moment as much France as France itself, and in all things obedient to the nod of Bonaparte. Preparations were making by the French, or rather Corsicans, for the invasion of Sardinia. The five districts of Corsica were obliged to furnish 1000 men each, whose whole camp-equipage consisted of a light linen jacket, trowsers, red cap, shoes, a musquet, accoutrements, such as our gentlemen go a-shooting with, and a short jacket. "Sardinia," he says, "will be lost without a struggle; and yet the majority of the Sardinians would fly to receive us; but, if we will not, then the French, in preference to remaining as they are, oppressed with taxes, and no protection from the Barbary States. Corsica is so much oppressed by requisitions of men from it, that I am told they would gladly again shake off the French yoke; and this last order for 5000 men, for the conquest of Sardinia, has made them outrageous. But Bonaparte cares for nothing; he sets all his engines to work; if they

Importance of Sardinia.

succeed, it is well ; if not, he is no worse than he was."

His lordship afterwards became more and more impressed with the importance of Sardinia. He represented that it was worth a hundred Malts, in position ; that it had the finest harbour for men of war in the world ; that it abounded in corn, cattle, and wood, and that, as it produced the king a revenue of no more than £5000 a year, after its wretched establishment was paid, if it could be purchased by the British government for half a million, both parties would have an excellent bargain. But the experiment made a few years before in Corsica, and the difficulty of protecting the coast of so extensive an island, deterred ministers from giving their countenance to the proposal. Still Nelson ventured to predict that, if from delicacy or pity for the king of Sardinia, we did not take possession of the island, the French certainly would.

Months elapsed, and the French fleet manifested no disposition to quit Toulon. Nelson soon discovered that the station was not a lucrative one ; not that he coveted wealth for his own sake, unless inasmuch as it enabled him to indulge the natural benevolence of his heart. "Somehow," he says, in October, 1803, "my mind is not sharp enough for prize-money. Lord Keith would have made £20,000 ; I have not made £6000." "However," he observes at another time, "I shall endeavour to do what is right in every situation ; and some ball may soon close all my accounts with this world of care and vexation."

The chief command, however, afforded his lordship many gratifying occasions of exercising the patronage attached to it. Thus, when the duke of Clarence recommended to his notice a son of the renowned Rodney's, he replied : "I agree with your royal highness that the son of a Rodney ought to be the *protégé*

Nelson's Sentiments respecting Patronage.

of every person in the kingdom, and particularly of the sea-officers: had I known that there had been this claimant, some of my own lieutenants must have given up to such a name, and he should have been placed in the *Victory*—she is full, and I have twenty on my list; but, whatever numbers I have, the name of Rodney must cut many of them out.”

In the same spirit he thus wrote, on a similar occasion, to Earl St. Vincent: “I had not, my dear lord, forgot to notice the son of lord Duncan. I consider the near relations of brother officers as legacies to the service. On the subject of promotions, I beg leave to say a few words, because I feel now exactly as you have felt in a similar situation to mine; and I rejoice that you are not only alive but in office to bear witness to the truth of my words, which I should have quoted, even if you had been not in office—‘that it was absolutely necessary merit should be rewarded at the moment; and that the officers of the fleet should look up to the commander-in-chief for their reward: for that otherwise the good or bad opinion of the commander-in-chief would be of no consequence.’ You always promoted meritorious officers out of the *Victory* and *Ville de Paris*, and many private ships, for their merit. The good effect was that whatever was undertaken succeeded. I myself stand in that situation, and Hardy, rewarded by you as commander-in-chief. You know there is nothing you can desire me to do that I shall not do with pleasure; and, if I had known the intentions of the Admiralty respecting the lieutenant mentioned, he would certainly have been appointed; but, having appointed a very gallant and meritorious officer, who had in a most particular manner distinguished himself on board the *Isis* at Copenhagen, it would have lowered me in the fleet that my follower, who had performed gallant services under my eye, should be displaced.”

His attention to Young Officers.

Hearing that the brother of his friend, Captain Foley, was dead, he thus expressed the warmth of his attachment to that officer: "How little, my dear Foley, do we know who is to go first! Gracious God! I am sure, to all appearance, he was more likely to see us pass away than we him. I only desire that you will always charge yourself in reminding me of your nephew, in whatever station I may be. I should be most ungrateful, if I could for a moment forget your public support of me in the day of battle, or your private friendship, which I esteem most highly; therefore, as far as relates to you, your nephew, and myself, let this letter stand against me."

The attention which he paid to some of the youngest officers who had the honour of serving under him will appear from the following letters. To Mr. J. Dalton, on board the *Renown*, he says: "As Mrs. Lutwidge sends me word that you have admired some of my naval battles, I think that you will like to receive from me a medal, which was struck by the partiality of my friends in remembrance of one of those actions: at least, it will serve to remind you that on the 13th Dec. 1803, I had first the pleasure of being known to you. A wish to imitate successful battles is the sure road by exertion to surpass them, which that you may do, for your own honour and the advantage of your country, is my sincere wish." To Mr. Charles Connor, a *protégé* of Lady Hamilton's, on his being rated midshipman on board the *Niger*, he wrote as follows: "As Captain Hill-yer has been so good as to say that he would rate you mid, I sincerely hope that your conduct will ever continue to deserve his kind notice and protection by a strict and very active attention to your duty. If you deserve well, you are sure of my assistance. Mr. Scott will furnish you with money to begin your mess, and I shall allow you £30 a year, if it be neces-

Application in behalf of Captain Hillyer.

sary, which Captain Hillyer will supply you with. And as you from this day start in the world as a man, I trust that your future conduct in life will prove you both an officer and a gentleman. Recollect that you must be a seaman to be an officer, and also that you cannot be a good officer without being a gentleman."

That filial affection which was always so conspicuous in Nelson's character was never passed unrewarded, when he observed it in those who served under him; and such was the liberality of his mind that he was always desirous to conceal these friendly efforts from the officers whom he endeavoured to serve. "I wish it to appear as a God-send," he was accustomed to say. He had been particularly struck with the conduct of the Captain Hillyer just mentioned, towards a widowed mother, brother, and sisters. Accordingly, when writing to Earl St. Vincent, he says: "Captain Hillyer is most deserving of all your lordship can do for him; and, in addition to his public merits, has a claim upon us. At twenty-four years of age, he maintained his mother and sisters, and a brother, until I made him a lieutenant for his bravery a short time ago. For these reasons, he declined the Ambuscade, which was offered to him; because, although he might thus get his rank, yet, if he were put upon half-pay, his family would be the sufferers. From all these circumstances, so honourable to Captain Hillyer, independent of his services, which every one thought would have obtained him promotion in the late war, I beg leave to submit, as an act of the greatest kindness, that, as the Niger is a very fine fast-sailing frigate, well manned and in most excellent condition, she may be fitted with the Madras's 32-pound carronades, which are not so heavy as her present 9-pounders, and that your lordship would recommend her being considered as a post-ship,

Nelson's Regard for Discipline.

either a 32 or 28. Captain Hillyer's activity would soon complete the additional number of men, and she would be an efficient frigate." In consequence of this application, a commission was sent out for Captain Hillyer, and the Niger was established as a post-ship.

The following entries in his Diary, in 1803, will serve to show that merit in any station was not likely to be disregarded by Nelson: "August 1st, I have had the pleasure of rewarding merit in the person of Mr. Hindman's, gunner's son of the Bellerophon, for his conduct this day five years." "Nov. 7. I had the comfort of making an old Agamemnon, George Jones, gunner into the Cameleon brig."

Nelson's affectionate disposition, however, did not warp his regard for the rules and discipline of the service. In writing respecting a young officer, who had behaved improperly to his captain, and was in consequence to be brought to a court-martial, his lordship thus answered the intercession made in his favour by a friend of Sir John B. Warren's. "We would all do every thing in our power to oblige so gallant and good an officer as our friend Warren; but what would he do if he were here?—exactly what I have done, and am still willing to do. The young man must write such a letter of contrition as would be an acknowledgment of his great fault; and with a sincere promise, if his captain will intercede to prevent the impending court-martial, never so to misbehave again. On his captain's enclosing me such a letter, with a request to cancel the order for the trial, I might be induced to do it; but the letters and reprimand will be given in the public Order Book of the fleet, and read to all the officers. The young man has pushed himself forward to notice, and he must take the consequences. We must recollect, my dear admiral, it was upon the quarter-deck, in

Nelson's remembrance of Merton.

the face of the ship's company, that he treated the captain with contempt, and I am in duty bound to support the authority and consequence of every officer under my command. A poor ignorant seaman is for ever punished for contempt to *his* superior."

Amidst the official duties of his station, his mind was often reverting to the happy home he had left at Merton. He seems to have been impressed with the opinion that the war could not last long; and, in his correspondence with Lady Hamilton, he repeatedly expresses his belief that there would be peace much sooner than was generally expected: "and that," he says, "will be to me the very highest pleasure in this world, to return to Merton and your dear beloved society. Then, I agree with you that 'I would not give sixpence to call the king my uncle.'" Again, referring to his opinion of the speedy termination of the war and his return to England, he says: "I shall hope to find the new room built, the grounds laid out neatly, but not expensively; new Piccadilly gates; kitchen-garden, &c. Only let us have a plan, and all will go on well. It will be a great source of amusement to you. I trust that we shall turn rich by being economists. Spending money to please a pack of people is folly and without thanks." In another letter, he clearly expresses his intentions in regard to his fair correspondent, in case of his surviving Lady Nelson. "If," he says, "Mr. Addington gives you the pension, it is well: but do not let it fret you. Have you not Merton? It is clear — the first purchase — and I hope one of these days that you will be my own duchess of Bronte, and then a fig for them all!"

Being informed by Lady Hamilton that his brother Maurice's widow was about to sell her plate for the purpose of paying her debts, he thus wrote: "Although I cannot well afford it, yet I could not

His adopted Daughter, Horatia.

bear that poor blind Mrs. Nelson should be in want in her old years and sell her plate; therefore, if you will find out what her debts are, if they come within my power, I will certainly pay them. Many, I dare say, if they had commanded here, would have made money; but I can assure you, for prizes made within the Mediterranean, I have not more than paid my expences. However, I would rather pinch myself than she, poor soul, should want. I am sure we should feel more comfort in assisting our friends than in loaded tables and entertaining a set of people who care not for us." Before he closed his letter, however, he added: "An account is this moment brought me that a small sum is payable to me for some neutral taken off Cadiz, in May, 1800; so that I shall not be poorer for my gift."

In his correspondence with Lady Hamilton, Nelson makes frequent mention of a child, named Horatia; and, in the letter just quoted, he says that he will settle £4000 in trustees' hands for her, "for," he adds, "I will not put it in my power to have her left destitute: for she would want friends if we left her in this world. She shall be independent of any smiles or frowns." This infant, under the name of Horatia Nelson Thompson, passed for his adopted daughter; but there can be no doubt that she was attached to him by a much closer tie. She was christened in the parish of Marylebone, when upwards of two years old, a few days before Nelson sailed to assume the command in the Mediterranean, on which occasion his lordship and Lady Hamilton were her sponsors. She was certainly an object of his constant and most tender regard; and at his request Lady Hamilton received her at Merton Place, and undertook the care of her education. "I am glad," he says in one of his letters, "to find, my dear Emma, that you mean to take Horatia home. Ay, she is like her mother;

Nelson's Attachment to Lady Hamilton.

will have her own way or kick up a devil of a dust; But you will cure her. I am afraid I should spoil her; for I am sure I would shoot any one who would hurt her." More than once he lays a particular charge on her ladyship "that a strong netting, about three feet high, may be placed round the Nile, [so he called the canal] that the little thing may not tumble in." On the 1st of August he wrote: "Hardy is now busy hanging up your and Horatia's picture. I want no others to ornament my cabin. I can contemplate them, and find new beauties every day, and I do not want any body else." Never did knight of the olden time feel a more enthusiastic attachment to the mistress of his affections than Nelson manifested for this lady. It bordered, indeed, on adoration. The portrait of her which he mentions, and which he familiarly called his guardian genius, was always placed in his cabin, where he contemplated it with all the reverence which a Catholic pays to his patron saint; he constantly wore a fine miniature of her next his heart; and it was with her image before him that he combated the enemies of his country. In short, as he himself said, 'Nelson's Alpha and Omega was Emma.'

Meanwhile, Bonaparte had renewed the threats of invasion which he had held out at the close of the preceding war. These Nelson only laughed at. His opinions respecting that military adventurer were expressed in no very measured terms. To Mr. Drummond, the British envoy at Constantinople, he wrote: "According to reports, the war is very unpopular, and I hope it will end in the destruction of that man of tyranny, Bonaparte: but I detest Europe for being so mean-spirited as to submit to the mandates of this Corsican — I blush for their meanness. If we are but true to ourselves, a fig for the great Bonaparte!" "What!" he says to Sir A. Ball,

His Opinion of Bonaparte.

"does Bonaparte begin to find excuses necessary? I thought he would invade England in the face of the sun; now he wants a three days' fog; that never yet happened, and, if it should, how are his craft to be kept together? He will find more excuses." And to the grand vizir he wrote: "If the French unite their fleets outside the Mediterranean with that at Toulon, it is not the Sublime Porte's being at peace with Bonaparte that will prevent an invasion of the Morea and Egypt; your highness knows them too well to put any confidence in what they say. Bonaparte's tongue is that of a serpent oiled." In the same spirit he wrote to Lord Hawkesbury: "The French fleet from Toulon has as many destinations as there are countries; for it is by no means sure that Bonaparte always makes war upon his enemies. It is more to his advantage sometimes to attack his friends, especially if they are weak and wish to defend themselves."

Never was greater vigilance exercised than in the watch which Nelson kept upon the enemy in Toulon. His station off that port he called his *home*, and he never left it but when it became absolutely necessary to obtain supplies of water and provisions. For these he resorted to the Madalena islands, off the north end of Sardinia, and some, especially lemons and onions, he occasionally obtained from Rosas in Spain. By his extraordinary attention to this point, the squadron was kept in the highest health, notwithstanding the severity of the tempestuous weather to which they were exposed during the winter months in the Gulf of Lyons. The crews were thus always ready for any service, and their commander was justly proud of the spirit that prevailed among them. "A British fleet," said he, "was never in higher order, health, and good humour, than the one I have the happiness to command; and, if the French do not

Nelson's Anxiety to get at the French Fleet.

rue the day when we get alongside of them, it will not be the fault of the captains, officers, and men."

In writing to Mr. Addington, he says:—"The French are not yet out, though about a fortnight ago they made an appearance of doing so; indeed, some of their ships were outside of the harbour; but I rather think it was to get some exercise. However, they took wit in their anger and returned." And again, "Never was a squadron of ships more anxious to meet them. I can have no excuse, nor do I want the country to make any for me. If I see the enemy, my exertions shall be used to lay the squadron well in; and the event, with the blessing of Providence on a just cause, we have no reason to fear. Till the battle is over, I hope to write to you no more; whether I survive it or not, my name shall never bring a blush on my friends."

He explains to Sir Alexander Ball his reason for not sending Sir R. Bickerton to Malta, as he had intended. "I believe from appearances the French fleet are so near putting to sea, that it would be cruel in me to send away so excellent an officer and friend, at a moment when we may expect so glorious a harvest.—I would give a good deal for a copy of the French admiral's orders. Report says it is Decrès, as he fought the Guillaume Tell so well. If he is a fighting man, so much the better; I hope he will not run away—we may want heels to catch them—that is the only fear I have." To his old acquaintance, Rear-Admiral Russel, he says: "Here I am waiting the pleasure of those fellows at Toulon, and we only long to get fairly alongside of them. I dare say," he jocosely adds, "there would be spare hats by the time we had done." On his return in November from his first visit to the Madalena islands, he observed that he found the French fleet in Toulon, "to all appearance in high feather, and as fine as paint

Nelson's Anxiety to get at the French Fleet.

can make them. . . . Our weather-beaten ships," he adds, "I have no fears, will make their sides like a plum-pudding."

"I believe," he wrote to his old friend Davison, "I attend more to the French fleet than making captures; but, of what I have, I can say as old Haddock did: 'It never cost a sailor a tear or the nation a farthing.' That thought is far better than prize-money; not that I despise prize-money — quite the contrary — I wish I had £100,000 this moment, and I will do every thing consistent with my good name to obtain it. I believe we are in the right fighting trim, let them come as soon as they please. I never saw a fleet altogether so well officered and manned; would to God the ships were half as good! We ought to be amply repaid some day for all our toil. My crazy ships are getting into a very indifferent state, and others will soon follow; the finest ones in the service would soon be destroyed by such terrible weather. I know well enough that, if I were to go into Malta, I should save the ships during this bad season; but if I am to watch the French I must be at sea, and if at sea must have bad weather, and if the ships are not fit to stand bad weather, they are useless; unfortunately in bad weather I am always sea-sick. But, my dear friend, my eyesight fails me most dreadfully. I firmly believe that in a few years I shall be stone blind: it is this only of all my maladies that makes me unhappy; but God's will be done!"

A report reached him that the French fleet had slipped out of Toulon, and had been seen off Minorca. On this occasion he writes to the Duke of Clarence: "I am absolutely beginning this letter in a fever of the mind; it is thick as buttermilk and blowing a Levanter." He then mentions the report relative to the enemy's fleet, and proceeds: "Your royal highness will readily imagine my feelings, although I

Nelson's Anxiety to get at the French Fleet.

cannot bring my mind to believe they are actually out; but to miss them!—God forbid! They are my superior in numbers, but, in every thing else, I believe, I have the happiness of commanding the finest squadron in the world—Victory, Kent, Superb, Triumph, Belleisle, and Renown! . . . If I should miss these fellows my heart will break: I am actually only now recovering the shock of missing them in 1798, when they were going to Egypt. If I miss them, I will give up the cudgels to some more fortunate commander. God knows, I only serve to fight those scoundrels, and if I cannot do that I should be better on shore.” In a few days, however, he learned that the report which had given him so much uneasiness was erroneous.

Notwithstanding the accounts which the admiral continued to receive of the Toulon fleet being ready to put to sea, they were still unwilling to encounter an inferior force, since it was commanded by Nelson, and therefore remained in port. From the number of troops collecting in the first months of 1804, in the south of France and the northern parts of Italy, together with the preparation of transports both at Genoa and Leghorn, and the intelligence that the French army had baked a month's bread, the admiral concluded that some expedition was preparing, and that it would be directed against Sicily or Egypt. Regardless of any superiority of number, his sole study was how to baffle the designs of the enemy. He endeavoured to buoy up the dejected spirits of the Court of Naples, where he had always kept one of his ships, to ensure the personal safety of the royal family, and wrote thus to Sir John Acton: “What a zealous man can do to meet all points of difficulty shall be done. My squadron is the finest for numbers in the world, and much may be expected from it; and, should superior numbers join, we must look

Anticipations of a Battle.

them in the face. *Nil desperandum!* God is good, and our cause is just. I beg you will assure their majesties that Nelson is Nelson still, and most zealously attached to their service." In the same firm tone he wrote to General Villettes, commander of the forces at Malta, "I expect that the Ferrol squadron will get to Toulon; if so, they will have fifteen sail of the line; but what a fleet like this I have the honour to command can do, will be done. There are nine of us!" To Captain Gore, who had the command of a detached squadron of frigates, he wrote: "The Admiralty seem to think that the Spaniards may be hostile to us, and therefore have put me on my guard. Do not let it escape your lips—I am determined to have the first blow; even if they come with their whole eighteen, they shall not join the French. If they come up the Mediterranean, and you have a mind for a shooting party, come with your frigates." About the same time, he wrote to his old friend Troubridge:—"You must have reading enough, and your letters convey to you only complaints and misery of ships and men. I have none to make; we are all cheerful and healthy, and our expenditure of stores has been, comparatively speaking, nothing. The French want to get out, and we want them out. Yesterday, two of their frigates were outside Hieres, peeping to know if we were gone to the devil. Ball is sure they are going to Egypt; Mr. Elliot, at Naples, to Sicily; and the king of Sardinia to his only spot." Early in 1804, Admiral Latouche Trévillé took the command of the French fleet at Toulon. "He was sent for on purpose," said Nelson, "as he beat me at Boulogne, to beat me again, but he seems very loth to try." On the 10th of April he wrote: "Yesterday, a rear-admiral and seven sail of ships, including frigates, put their nose outside the harbour. If they go on playing this game, some day we shall lay salt upon their tails."

Capture of the Swift Cutter.

About this time, he was in expectation of the arrival of the Swift cutter, but had the mortification to hear not only that she was taken, but that all the public despatches and private letters had fallen into the hands of the French. "A very pretty piece of work," he observes, in his letter to Lady Hamilton. "I am not surprised at the capture, but very much so that any despatches should be sent in a vessel with 23 men, not able to cope with any row-boat privateer. The loss of the Hindostan [a store ship, which took fire accidentally] was great enough; but for importance it is lost in comparison to the probable knowledge the enemy will obtain of our connections with foreign countries. Foreigners for ever say, and it is true — 'We dare not trust England;' one way or other we are sure to be committed." Relative to this capture, he says further: "I find that your picture is very much admired by the French consul at Barcelona: and that he has not sent it to be admired — which I am sure it would be — by Bonaparte. They pretend that there were three pictures taken. I wish I had them; but they are all gone as irretrievably as the despatches: unless we may read them in a book, as we printed their correspondence from Egypt. But, from us, what can they find out? That I love you most dearly, and hate the French most damnably. Dr. Scott went to Barcelona to try to get the private letters; but I fancy they are all gone to Paris. The Swedish and American consuls told him that the French consul had your picture and read your letters; and Doctor thinks one of them probably read the letters. By the master's account of the cutter, I would not have trusted a pair of old shoes in her. He tells me she did not sail, but was a good sea-boat. I hope Mr. Marsden will not trust any more of my private letters in such a conveyance; if they choose to trust the affairs of the public in

Dispute with Artillery Officers.

such a thing, I cannot help it." Again he says on this subject: "Your letters by Swift I shall never get back. The French consul at Barcelona is bragging that he has three pictures of you from the Swift. I do not believe him; but what if he had a hundred! Your resemblance is so deeply engraved in my heart, that there it can never be effaced; and, who knows? some day I may have the happiness of having a living picture of you!"

During the spring of this year, some young artillery officers, serving on board the bomb-vessels attached to the fleet, refused to allow their men to do any duty but what related to mortars. The naval officers loudly complained of this conduct, and incessant disputes were the consequence. Nelson, with his usual warmth, stood forward in support of the rights of the navy. "You will see," he says, addressing Sir T. Troubridge, "that I have been obliged to write a letter to the Admiralty, on the subject of soldiers embarked on board ships of war; and I have written it strong, as I know it must go further than your Board. It is the old history—trying to do away the Act of Parliament; but I trust they will never succeed; for, when they do, farewell to our naval superiority. We should be prettily commanded. You may say—they are not intended to command the navy, but that the navy is not to command soldiers on board ship. Let them once gain the step of being independent of the navy on board ship, and they will soon have the other and command us. It may be said, if the soldiers behave improperly, they would be tried by a court-martial on shore. Were that possible, of what members would that court be composed? Mostly subalterns, I fancy, who, although we might think the officer had behaved very improperly, might and probably would think that he had behaved very properly to us sea-brutes. But,

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thank God, my dear Troubridge, the king cannot do away with the Act of Parliament! Although my career is nearly run, yet it would embitter my future days and expiring moments to hear of our navy being sacrificed to the army. I can readily conceive the attempts of the army at this moment, when they think themselves of such great importance. The Admiralty order might lead those wrong who do not know that nothing but an Act of Parliament can do away an Act of Parliament." To Earl St. Vincent he expressed himself still more decidedly on a subject that was so near his heart. "There is no real happiness, my dear lord, in this world. With all content and smiles around me, up start these artillery-boys — I understand they are not beyond that age — and set us all at defiance, speaking in the most disrespectful manner of the navy and its commanders. I know you, my dear lord, so well, that with your quickness the matter would have been settled, and perhaps some of them broke. I am perhaps more patient, but, I do assure you, not less resolved, if my plan of conciliation is not attended to. You and I are on the eve of quitting the theatre of our exploits; but we hold it to our successors never, whilst we have a tongue to speak or a hand to write, to allow the navy to be in the smallest degree injured in its discipline by our conduct. If these continued attacks upon the navy are to be carried on every two or three years, it would be much better for the navy to have its own corps of artillery." In consequence of what then occurred in the Mediterranean, and also in the Channel fleet, a corps of marine artillery was established.

The hopes which Nelson had long cherished of enticing the enemy from under the guns of their own batteries appeared to be nearly realized on the 23^d of May, 1804, when he detached Rear-admiral Campbell, in the *Canopus*, 84, with the *Donegal*, of the

Latouche Treville ventures out of Toulon.

same force, and the Amazon frigate, to reconnoitre the outer road of Toulon. Admiral Campbell remained for some hours as near the mouth of the harbour as the batteries would permit; when the admiral, Latouche Treville, got under weigh, and stood out towards the little British squadron with two ships of 84 guns, three of 74, three frigates of 44, and a corvette. The frigates and a 74 gained considerably, and the headmost of the former opened a distant teasing fire on the Donegal. This was not to be long borne patiently by her commander, Sir Richard Strachan, who luffed up, and fired a broadside, which instantly checked the ardour of the enemy. Some shot from the Canopus, at the same time, retarded the progress of the line-of-battle ship. The French force was so far superior to Admiral Campbell's little squadron, that it would have been madness to hazard an engagement; he therefore made sail, and the enemy continued to follow for some time under a crowd of canvas; but, according to the expression of an officer of the Canopus, fearing lest he should be decoyed into the jaws of the Viscount, who, with the remainder of the fleet, was nine leagues distant, Latouche Treville hauled his wind, and returned to Toulon, *covered with glory!* The same night the British ships joined the admiral, who, having heard the firing indistinctly, had detached the Leviathan towards Toulon; but, before she had proceeded far, Admiral Campbell was discovered returning. It was so extraordinary a circumstance for the French commander to find himself outside the port, that he could not resist the opportunity of boasting in his official despatch that 'he had chased the whole British fleet, which had fled before him.'

Nelson, before indignant at the falsehoods which Latouche Treville had circulated at Boulogne, was exasperated by this new gasconade. He wrote to the

The French Admiral's boasting Report.

Admiralty that, "if his character was not yet established for not being apt to run away, it was not worth while to put the world right." At the same time he felt it incumbent on him, for the satisfaction of the Board, to send home a copy of the Victory's log. In writing to Captain Sutton, he said on this subject: "I have every reason to think that, if this fleet gets fairly up with Mons. Latouche, his letter, with all his ingenuity, must be different from his last. We had fancied that we had chased him into Toulon; for, blind as I am, I could see his water-line, when he clued his topsails up, shutting in Sepet. But, from the time of his meeting Captain Hawker in the Isis, I never heard of his acting otherwise than as a poltroon and a liar. Contempt is the best mode of treating such a miscreant." Nelson, however, appears to have been too much irritated to confine himself to that sentiment. Writing to his brother, he said: "You will have seen Latouche's letter; how he chased me and how I ran. I keep it; and, if I take him, by God he shall eat it!" A few months afterwards, to the extreme disappointment of the British admiral, his antagonist gave him the slip, in a way that not all the vigilance and valour even of a Nelson could prevent his doing. He was suddenly taken ill and died, as the French papers said, in consequence of walking so often up to the signal post on Sepet, to watch the British squadron. "If he had but come out and fought us," exclaimed Nelson, "it would have added at least ten years to my life!"

On hearing that Bonaparte had assumed the imperial dignity and placed himself on the throne of France, his lordship, indulging some speculations on the probable consequence of this measure to the politics of Europe, observed to Mr. Elliot, the British ambassador at Naples: "I believe no one can guess what the two Emperors of Russia and Germany will

State of Nelson's Health.

do. If they acknowledge Bonaparte as their brother, there is no great honour in being allied to their family; but I think, in that case, it would give us peace. If they will not call him *brother*—Gracious Heaven! thy ways are hid from man! Jack Corse brother to two emperors!—then, I suppose, we should have a general war; either way it must benefit both England and Naples. You may rely that I never trust a Corsican or a Frenchman; I would give the devil all the good ones to take the remainder.” And to Earl St. Vincent he wrote: “The new emperor—bravo, Corsican!—will I hope begin his reign by ordering his fleet to come out; for if they do not very soon they will wear us out, and most particularly myself. My health has suffered very much, but I am as happy in the command as man can be.”

To a medical friend he wrote at this time, that the health of his fleet could not be exceeded; but, in regard to himself, he says, “I really believe that my shattered carcass is in the worst plight of the whole fleet. I have had a sort of rheumatic fever, they tell me; but I have felt the blood gushing up the left side of my head, and the moment it covers the brain I am fast asleep. I am now better of that; and with violent pain in my side and night-sweats, with heat in the evening and quite flushed. The pain in my head and spasms I have not had for some time.” His sentiments concerning the essential importance of attention to the health of the men under his command ought to be adopted by every officer—“I am sure,” he says, writing to Dr. Baird, “no man is more able to place our hospitals in a proper state than yourself, and that you always bear in mind not to be penny-wise and pound-foolish. A small sum well laid out will keep fleets healthy; but it requires large sums to make a sickly fleet healthy, besides the immense loss of personal services. Health cannot

Nelson declines the Thanks of the City of London.

be dearly bought at any price. . . . I hope," he adds, turning to himself, "to hold out till after the battle; but, as you know, mine is a wretched constitution, and my sight is getting very, very bad."

While his lordship was engaged in this arduous duty of watching the enemy, the city of London, grateful for the security which British commerce derived from his services, but misconceiving the mode in which his operations were conducted, transmitted to him, through the lord-mayor, a vote of thanks for his skill and perseverance in blockading the port of Toulon, so as to prevent the enemy's fleet there from putting to sea. As he had, in 1801, remonstrated with the lord-mayor because no thanks had been voted by the city of London for the victory of Copenhagen, so he now declined to accept thanks which had not been deserved. The communication of the chief magistrate reached him precisely on the anniversary of the famous 1st of August, and this circumstance probably added to the energy of the reply which he wrote on the same day. He therein declared that no man set a higher value on the thanks of his fellow citizens than himself; but that he should feel as much ashamed to receive thanks for a particular service which he had not performed, as he should feel hurt at having a great victory passed over without notice. He observed that the port of Toulon had never been blockaded by him; but that, on the contrary, every opportunity had been afforded to the enemy to put to sea, in order that the hopes and expectations of his country might be realised. His lordship concluded with bearing liberal testimony to the zeal and talents of the flag-officers under him, whose names had been wholly omitted in this vote of thanks. "I assure your lordship," he said, "that the constant, zealous, and cordial support I have had in my command, from both rear-admiral Sir Richard

Severe Weather in the Mediterranean.

Bickerton and rear-admiral Campbell, has been such as calls forth my thanks and approbation. We have shared together the constant attention of being more than fourteen months at sea, and are ready to share the dangers and glory of a day of battle : therefore, it is impossible I can allow myself to be separated in thanks from such supporters."

The tempestuous weather of this summer contributed by no means to improve his health. He complained that the Mediterranean seemed altered — gales of wind for ever ; even in July seventeen days very severe weather. " However," he writes to the Duke of Clarence, " we have roughed it out better than could have been expected. I have always made it a rule never to contend with the gales, and either run to the southward to escape their violence, or furl all the sails and make the ships as easy as possible." In the month of August he became convinced, from the movements of the enemy in Toulon, that they were preparing for a start. He had long, he said, made up his mind never to be tired of waiting for them : " the longer the happy day is deferred, still every day brings it nearer, and we all feel the day will arrive, the sooner the better certainly, or I shall not be in at the death." To Captain Parker, of the *Amazon*, he wrote : " I hope, my dear Parker, you are making haste to join me, for the day of battle cannot be far off, when I shall want every frigate, for the French have nearly one for every ship, and we may as well have a battle-royal — line-of-battle ships opposed to ships of the line, and frigates to frigates." He had learned that the French fleet had taken on board 7000 troops, and concluded that its destination was the West Indies, and then, said he, " farewell our islands." To Sir A. Ball he assigned the reasons for this opinion : " I should imagine now that the Russians are getting so large a naval force

Supposed Destination of the Toulon Fleet.

into the Mediterranean, that the Toulon fleet would not think of going to the eastward. I should rather believe the West Indies more likely for them to succeed in. Suppose this fleet escapes, and gets out of the Straits, I am of opinion I should bend my course to the westward; for, if they carry 7000 men, with what they have at Martinique and Guadeloupe, St. Lucia, Grenada, St. Vincent, Antigua, and St. Kitts, would fall; and in that case England would be so clamorous for peace that we should humble ourselves. I have weighed Ireland against the West Indies; with me the latter throws the beam up to the ceiling; but I may be wrong: it is at best but a guess, and the world attaches wisdom to him that guesses right." In the same letter he mentioned his expectation of being soon superseded by a new commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean. "I am very far from well," he says; "at the same time, if I were to get better, nothing could please me so much as returning to this command; but I have no interest, and another will come, and I think very probably Orde or Curtis. I can solemnly assure you that I am at present a poorer man than the day I was ordered to the Mediterranean command by upwards of £1000: but money I despise, except as it is useful, and I expect my prize-money is embarked in the Toulon fleet." He wrote on the same day to General Villettes; and, after repeating his ideas respecting the object of the French fleet, he added: "Whatever may be their destination, I shall certainly follow, be it even to the East Indies. Such a pursuit would do more, perhaps, towards restoring me to health, than all the doctors together. But, I fear, this is reserved for some happier man. Not that I can complain: I have had a good race of glory, but we are never satisfied; although I hope I am duly thankful for the past, yet one cannot help, being at sea, longing for a little more."

Nelson feels the Necessity of Rest.

On the 29th of September he thus addresses Lady Hamilton: "This day, my dearest Emma, which gave me birth, I consider as more fortunate than common days; as, by my coming into the world, it has brought me so intimately acquainted with you, whom my soul holds most dear. Forty-six years of toil and trouble! How few more the common lot of mankind leads us to expect!—and therefore it is almost time to think of spending the few last years in peace and quietness." In another letter he observed: "I should, for your sake and for many of our friends, have liked an odd hundred thousand pounds: but never mind. If they give me the choice of staying a few months longer, it will be very handsome; and for the sake of others we would give up very much of our own felicity. If they do not, we shall be happy with each other and dear Horatia." Shortly afterwards, he says;—"A few months rest I must have very soon. If I am in my grave, what are the mines of Peru to me? But, to say the truth, I have no idea of killing myself. I may with care live yet to do good service to the State. My cough is very bad; and my side, where I was struck on the 14th of February, is very much swelled; at times a lump as large as my fist, brought on by violent coughing; but I hope and believe my lungs are yet safe."

Notwithstanding the weak state of his health, Nelson would never leave his ship. On the 17th of October, he repaired with his squadron to the Madalena islands for wood, water, and other necessaries; and, though the royal family of Sardinia were at all times ready to show every attention to their gallant protector, he refused all indulgence, and persisted in his determination of remaining on board. Before he left Madalena, under the impression that he might soon sail for England and not be permitted to return, he presented a piece of plate to the church, as an

Remonstrance on the Conduct of Spain.

acknowledgment of the hospitality which the fleet under his command had received from the inhabitants. On the 26th of October he sailed to resume his station, and, as he added in his diary, with not a man-sick in his fleet. On the 30th, he looked into Toulon, where vice-admiral Villeneuve had hoisted his flag, and sent the following account of the enemy to the first lord of the Admiralty: "The weather was very thick when I looked into Toulon; but I believe a vice-admiral has hoisted his flag; his name I have not yet heard. They now amuse themselves with night signals; and, by the quantity of rockets and blue lights they show with every signal, they plainly mark their position. These gentlemen must soon be so perfect in theory, that they will come to sea to put their knowledge in practice. Could I see that day, it would make me happy."

The conduct of Spain, during Nelson's command in the Mediterranean, had drawn from him more than one spirited remonstrance. Acting under the influence of France, she had revived and put in force an order of the year 1771, excluding British ships from her ports. He wrote to Mr. Gibert, consul at Barcelona, desiring him to communicate his letter to the captain-general of Catalonia. "I am ready," he says, "to admit that the king of Spain may order us to be refused admittance into his ports, may refuse us even when there the rights of hospitality. He may certainly, if he pleases, go to war with us. I deny none of these rights; but I claim every indulgence which is shown to the ships of our enemies. The French squadron at Corunna are acting almost as they please; the *Aigle* French ship of war is not turned out of Cadiz; the French frigate *Revenge* is permitted to go out of that port, cruise, and return with prizes and sell them. I will not state that every Spanish port is a home for French privateers, for

Remonstrance on the Conduct of Spain.

this is well known ; and I am informed that, even at Barcelona, English vessels captured by the French have been sold there. You will acquaint his excellency that I claim for every British ship or squadron the right of lying as long as I please in the ports of Spain, whilst it is allowed to other powers ; that I claim the rights of hospitality and civility, and every other right which the harmony subsisting between our sovereigns entitles us to." To Mr. Frere, the British ambassador at Madrid, he observed : " This conduct, I suppose, indicates a war with us ;" and his lordship earnestly requested Mr. Frere to give him immediate notice of such an event, that he might send to the West Indies and act upon it himself. In a subsequent letter to the same minister, he complains that British ships are not admitted into the Spanish ports in the same manner as the French. " I am ready," he says, " to make large allowances for the miserable situation Spain has placed herself in ; but there is a certain line, beyond which I cannot submit to be treated with disrespect. We have given up vessels taken within gun-shot of the Spanish shore, and yet French vessels are permitted to attack our ships from the Spanish shore. Your excellency may assure the Spanish government that, in whatever place the Spaniards allow the French to attack us, in that place I shall order the French to be attacked."

Notwithstanding the gross partiality shown by the Spanish government, the British administration forbore to resent it by the adoption of such measures as would have placed the resources of the Peninsula at the entire disposal of our implacable foe. Even so late as the month of November, 1804, Nelson continued to receive instructions from the Admiralty not to detain, in the first instance, any ship belonging to his Catholic Majesty sailing from a Spanish port ;

Rapture with Spain.

but to require the commander of such ship to return directly to the port whence she came; and only in the event of his refusing to comply with such requisition, the admiral was to detain and send her to Gibraltar or to England. He was further directed not to detain any homeward-bound Spanish ship of war, unless having treasure on board, nor merchant ships on any account whatever.

The tenor of these instructions encouraged Nelson to hope that the peace between the two countries would not be interrupted; but, before they reached him, that question had been decided. The same vessel which brought them conveyed orders to Admiral Cornwallis to detach two frigates, which were to proceed with all possible despatch off Cadiz and the mouth of the Straits, and to unite their endeavours with those of any of his majesty's ships they might find there, to intercept and detain some Spanish frigates, expected with treasure from South America. This duty was allotted to the *Indefatigable*, *Medusa*, *Amphion*, and *Lively* frigates, which, on the 5th of October, fell in with four Spanish frigates laden with treasure. The Spanish commanders made it a point of honour not to suffer themselves to be detained by a force only just equal to their own; so that the British could not execute their orders without bloodshed. An action commenced. One of the Spanish frigates soon blew up, with 800,000 dollars on board: the other three were taken, with their rich cargoes, consisting of silver, gold, and platina, to the value of between three and four millions of dollars. This event was speedily followed by a formal declaration of war by Spain. Nelson and his brave officers might now have justly anticipated that reward from prize-money which their exemplary vigilance and perseverance deserved; but even that prospect was snatched from them by the appointment of Sir John

Sailing of the French Fleet.

Orde, with a small squadron, to a separate command off Cadiz.

In the first days of 1805, reports continued to reach his lordship that the French were embarking troops at Toulon, some said for Naples and Sicily, others for the Morea and Egypt. Leaving the *Active*, Captain Moubray, and the *Seahorse*, Hon. C. Boyle, to watch the enemy's motions, Nelson repaired with his squadron to Madalena, whither he was followed on the 19th of January by the *Seahorse*, with information that the French fleet had put to sea on the preceding day. The admiral immediately got under weigh, and to save time ran after six o'clock in the evening through the passage between Biche and Sardinia, which is so narrow that only one of the ships could pass at a time, and each was guided merely by the stern lights of the preceding ship. The promptness shown by Nelson on this occasion was regarded by the Duke of Clarence as the most striking instance of his determined spirit as a naval officer, and noticed as such in the House of Lords by his royal highness. The enemy's squadron consisted of eleven sail of the line and two frigates. The *Seahorse* narrowly escaped being taken by them, and the *Venus* sloop of 10 guns, with despatches from his lordship, actually fell into their hands, but not till the despatches had been thrown overboard. From the direction which the French were seen steering, he concluded that they meant to shape their course round the southern end of Sardinia, and he thence inferred that Egypt was their destination. To counteract any design against that quarter, Nelson on the 20th sent advice to the British ambassador at Constantinople of the sailing of the fleet, with troops on board, and transmitted the same information to the governor of Coron in the Morea.

He now bore away along the island of Sardinia,

Nelson proceeds in quest of the Enemy.

and sent the *Active* and *Seahorse* to reconnoitre the bay of Cagliari, where no intelligence could be obtained. Proceeding southward, the squadron was joined on the 26th by the *Phoebe*, Hon. Captain Capel, who reported that on the 19th he had kept company with an enemy's ship of 80 guns, which had lost all her topmasts, until she got into Ajaccio. Captain Hallowell was despatched in the *Tigre* to Palermo, with letters to Sir John Acton and to Sir Alexander Ball, to be forwarded by express to Malta; but returned without any information. The sanguine and disappointed mind of Nelson was again on the rack, and his nights became sleepless. "Stromboli," he remarked in his diary, "burnt very strongly throughout the night of the 28th." In his opinion, Egypt was decidedly the great object of the French, and thither he accordingly determined to steer.

On his arrival off Alexandria, Captain Hallowell was sent in with the admiral's despatches to the British consul at that port. The Turks at Alexandria were much alarmed at the appearance of the ships, which they mistook for French; but, as the admiral observes, "they were in no condition to defend that most important place from an attack by surprise of 500 men. The three Turkish frigates loaded their guns and made some preparations for defence." The enemy's fleet had not been seen or heard of at Alexandria. Nelson then bore up and steered for Malta.

The ill success of his exertions, so similar to what had happened in 1798, produced the same kind of effect on his harassed mind, and furnished a subject of cavil to his impatient countrymen at home. His letter to Lord Melville, written on the 14th of February, when within 100 leagues of Malta, shows with what reflection and judgment he had drawn the conclusion that Egypt was the enemy's object; and how cautious all men should be, whether in power or not, of attaching

Return of the French to Toulon.

blame to the unsuccessful exertions of great naval or military commanders. "I have consulted no man," he says. "therefore the whole blame of ignorance in forming my judgment must rest with me. I would allow no man to take from me an atom of my glory, had I fallen in with the French fleet, nor do I desire any man to partake of any of the responsibility — all is mine, right or wrong." Having stated his reasons, deduced from the state of the wind and weather and the course which the enemy were seen pursuing, for inferring that they were bound to Egypt, he says that, even in spite of his failure, he is confirmed in his former opinion; "and, therefore," he adds, "if my obstinacy or ignorance is so gross, I should recommend your superseding me." In writing on the same subject to Sir A. Ball, he says: "When I call to remembrance all the circumstances which I know at this moment, I approve, if nobody else does, of my own conduct. We know that the success of a man's measures is the criterion by which the world judges of the wisdom or folly of them. I have done my best. I feel I have acted right; and, should ministers think otherwise, they must get somebody of more wisdom."

Nelson soon afterwards received intelligence from Mr. Elliot, at Naples, that the French fleet, after having been dispersed in a gale of wind, had been compelled to return to Toulon, and that it had on board a considerable number of saddles and muskets. "These gentlemen," observes the admiral to Lord Melville, "are not accustomed to a Gulf of Lyons' gale, which we have buffeted for twenty-one months, and not carried away a spar. I most sincerely hope they will soon be in a state to put to sea again. Every one has an opinion respecting the destination of the enemy. Mine is more fully confirmed that it was Egypt. To what other country could they carry saddles and arms? I yet hope to meet them before I

Nelson's want of Frigates.

go hence. I would die ten thousand deaths rather than give up my command when the enemy is expected every day to be at sea." In this pursuit, as in the former, he had felt great distress for frigates, which he emphatically called the *eyes* of his fleet; and he furnished in it a striking practical illustration of his memorable maxim: "In sea affairs nothing is impossible and nothing improbable."

In writing to Lord Melville, he touched upon the great want of frigates and sloops on the Mediterranean station; and insisted that the stations of Gibraltar and Cadiz ought to be given to one officer; for, unless that were done, convoys could never be considered safe. "It may be thought by some," he proceeds, "but I am confident your lordship's liberal mind will not think so, that a desire of more extensive command, for the hope of prize-money, actuates me. Such people know me not. Let me be placed alongside the French admiral." When sending to Sir A. Ball a list of the sloops and brigs that had been detached to the eastward, he observed: "If I had them, I do assure you not one of them should go prize-hunting — that I have never done." Referring to the same subject when writing to Lord Moira, he said: "A blow struck in Europe would do more towards making us respected, and, of course, facilitating a peace, than the possession of Mexico or Peru, in both of which, I am sure, we are perfectly ignorant of the disposition of the inhabitants; and, above all, I hope we shall have no buccaneering expeditions. Such services fritter away our troops and ships, when they are wanted for much more important occasions, and are of no use beyond enriching a few individuals. I know not, my dear lord, if these sentiments coincide with your's: but, as glory and not money has through life been your pursuit, I rather think you will agree with me, that in Europe,

Disappointment of Nelson at the escape of the French Fleet.

and not abroad, is the place for us to strike a blow, which would make the Corsican look aghast even upon his usurped throne." In this letter, Nelson promises to pay every attention to Captain Austen, who had been recommended to him by Lord Moira. "I hope," he says, "to see him alongside a French 80-gun ship, and he cannot be better placed than in the *Canopus*, which was once a French admiral's ship and struck to me." He then concludes with one of those pithy expressions which occur so frequently in his correspondence. "I hope soon, my dear lord, to congratulate you on the birth of a son who will emulate his father's manliness. In these days I see many people, but very few *men*."

At length, on the 27th of February, after his unsuccessful pursuit, his lordship was compelled by violent gales of winds to anchor his fleet in the bay of Pulla, Sardinia. "What a dreadful thing," he wrote from that place to Sir R. Bickerton, "not either to get hold of the French fleet or even to hear of them since their return, except from Naples! What weather! did you ever see such in almost any country? It has forced me to anchor here, in order to prevent being drove to leeward, but I shall go to sea the moment it moderates." It was a most severe mortification to him that the French fleet had been crippled. "Bonaparte himself," said he, "cannot feel more disappointed than I. Had the weather been fine, we should have met off the island of Toro." After beating about some days, he was again compelled by another heavy gale to anchor on the 8th of March, in the Gulf of Palma. "You, my dear Ball," concludes one of his letters, "you will suppose my misery is at its full, and must change." From the 21st of January, when, if the enemy had not been crippled, he was so confident that he should have fallen in with them, every ship of his fleet had

The Enemy again puts to Sea.

remained prepared for battle, with not a bulk-head up, night or day. To add to his distress, a convoy had been intercepted, which, as he observes in one of his letters, would not have happened, had the officer off Cadiz been under his command. "I hear," he adds, "that I am not to be allowed to send a vessel even with my despatches to Lisbon — I bear it patiently: when I see Lord Melville and Nepean, something will be done. Either Sir John Orde should command all, or myself."

It was now Nelson's intention, as we learn from what he calls his "most secret memoranda," to make his appearance off Barcelona, in order to induce the enemy to believe that he was fixed on the coast of Spain, and to put to sea again, as their troops were still embarked. March passed away, however, without any movement. On the 1st of April, the squadron anchored in Pulla Bay, to water, and weighed on the 3^d, and made sail towards Toulon. On the following day, the *Phœbe* was discovered in the offing, with the signal flying that the French admiral was at sea. Villeneuve had actually sailed on the morning of the 31st of March, with eleven ships of the line, seven frigates, and two brigs. Neither from his course nor his manœuvres could any correct judgment be formed whether his fleet was bound eastward or westward; but, when last observed, on the evening of the 31st, the enemy were steering towards the coast of Africa. Acting upon this information, Nelson covered the channel between the Barbary coast and the island of Toro with frigates and the fleet, resolving not to risk the safety of Sardinia, Sicily, or Naples, till he was certain that the enemy were to the eastward of him. He wrote on the 5th of April to Mr. Stratton, our minister at Constantinople, to the grand vizir, and the capitan pacha, to
them upon their guard.

Nelson pursues down the Mediterranean.

Having waited in the situation which he had so judiciously taken, till he was satisfied that it was not the object of the enemy to pass between Sardinia and the African coast, he bore up with his fleet on the 7th for Palermo. Unable to obtain any intelligence either from that place or Messina, or by means of the frigates which he despatched in different directions, he now concluded that Villeneuve must have gone down the Mediterranean. He accordingly changed his course, and from the 11th made every possible exertion to get to the westward; sending frigates to Gibraltar and Lisbon, to procure provisions and obtain intelligence, and detaching one to Admiral Cornwallis, off Brest. It was the 16th before any tidings of the enemy's course could be obtained, when a neutral reported that the French had been seen off Cape de Gatte; and it was soon afterwards ascertained that they had passed the Straits of Gibraltar on the 8th. "If this man speaks true," said Nelson, "they may be half way to Ireland or Jamaica by this time. O that I could but find them! I am very unhappy!" Notwithstanding every exertion, his course was so impeded by hard gales from the west and north-west — whilst the French fleet had been favoured by strong easterly gales — that he did not get sight of Gibraltar till the 30th of April; and he complained to the Duke of Clarence that he had been "one whole month in getting down the Mediterranean, which the French had done in nine days." He now first learned that Villeneuve had been joined by a Spanish squadron from Cadiz, under Gravina. As it was then impossible to pass the Straits, he profited by the opportunity of watering in Mazari Bay on the African coast, and procuring from Tetuan a supply of cattle, fruit, and vegetables, for the squadron. This business was completed in a few hours, with an expedition and zeal perhaps

Nelson passes the Straits of Gibraltar.

without a parallel. A laudable spirit animated and impelled the officers and men of every ship under his command on such occasions, and made it a perpetual display of good-humoured emulation to be reported the first ready.

Nelson's sufferings from anxiety of mind continued, meanwhile, to be very great. "My good fortune," he says, writing to Sir A. Ball, "seems flown away. I cannot get a fair wind or even a side wind — dead foul! dead foul! But my mind is fully made up what to do when I leave the Straits, supposing there is no certain information of the enemy's destination. I believe this ill luck will go near to kill me; but, as these are times for exertion, I must not be cast down, whatever I may feel." To Lord Melville he emphatically wrote as follows: "I am not made to despair — what man can do shall be done. I have marked out for myself a decided line of conduct, and I shall follow it well up: although I have now before me a letter from the physician of the fleet, enforcing my return to England before the hot months."

On the 5th of May, a breeze having* at length sprung up from the eastward, the signal was immediately made to weigh; and the squadron stood to the westward, through the Strait. Writing to the secretary of the Admiralty, he says that if he should hear nothing of the enemy from Lisbon, or from the frigates which he might find off Cape St. Vincent, he should be induced to give credit to the rumour that their object was the West Indies; "and, in that case," he adds, "I think it my duty to follow them, or to the antipodes, should I believe that to be their destination." Unable to gain any intelligence from Gibraltar, "Surely," exclaimed his lordship, "I shall hear something of them from Sir John Orde's cruisers, which he must naturally have sent after them!" Sir

He learns the real destination of the French.

John, however, so far from taking any measures to ascertain the course of the enemy, had quitted his station and joined the Channel fleet. The transports left by him were ordered by his lordship from Lagos Bay, between which and Cape St. Vincent the fleet anchored on the evening of the 9th. The next day and succeeding night were busily employed in clearing the transports and completing the stores to five months. It was not till then that Nelson received any intelligence which could be depended upon, concerning the course of the combined fleet. Admiral Campbell, of the Portuguese service, came on board the *Victory*, and informed him in confidence that its destination was undoubtedly the West Indies. Nelson instantly decided on following them, notwithstanding their immense superiority of force. The French fleet consisted of twelve sail of the line, six 44-gun frigates, one of 26, three corvettes, and the *Cyane*, English prize: and the Spanish squadron of six ships of the line and one 44-gun frigate. They had on board nearly 5000 troops of both nations, under the command of General Lauriston. This fleet was likely to be further reinforced in the West Indies by a squadron under rear-admiral Missiessi, which had escaped from Rochfort early in the year. "I am going," said Nelson, writing to Sir John Acton, "to the West Indies, where the enemy have 24 sail of the line; my force is very, very inferior; I only take ten with me, and I only expect to be joined by six."

Nelson did not leave Cape St. Vincent until he had provided every thing in his power for the benefit of his majesty's service in those seas. He waited there till Admiral Knight, who was expected, had arrived with a fleet of transports, having on board 5000 troops; taking care that he should be seen safe inside the Gut; and, not feeling quite satisfied with

Pursues the Enemy to the West Indies.

the force of his flag-ship, *Queen*, and her companion, *Dragon*, his lordship added *Royal Sovereign*, Admiral Sir R. Bickerton, which in his opinion would render it impossible for any force at Carthagena to make an impression upon them. Before he sailed, he despatched a fast-sailing sloop, the *Martin*, with a letter to Lord Seaforth, governor of Barbadoes, requesting him, in case Admiral Cochrane should not be at that island, to open and read the official letter addressed to him, and to forward it with all possible expedition to the admiral. He also begged that an embargo might be laid on all vessels at Barbadoes, lest the enemy should be apprised of his arrival, and again escape him. Having taken this precaution, he weighed from Lagos Bay on the 11th of May. The ships which accompanied him in this memorable pursuit were :

Ships	Guns	Commanders.
<i>Victory</i>	110	{ Vice-Adm. Lord Nelson. Rear-Admiral Murray. Captain T. Hardy.
<i>Canopus</i>	80	Rear-Admiral T. Louis.
<i>Le Tigre</i>	80	Captain Hallowell.
<i>Donegal</i>	80	———— Malcolm.
<i>Spencer</i>	74	———— Hon. R. Stopford.
<i>Conqueror</i>	74	———— I. Pellew.
<i>Superb</i>	74	———— R. G. Keats.
<i>Belleisle</i>	74	———— W. Hargood.
<i>Leviathan</i>	74	———— W. Bayntun.
<i>Swiftsure</i>	74	———— Rutherford.
<i>Decade</i>	36	———— Stuart.
<i>Amazon</i>	38	———— Parker.
<i>Amphion</i>	32	———— Sutton.

These ships were well equipped, and his lordship felt precisely the same confidence in all his officers and men as they did in their unrivalled commander ; he believed them to be absolutely invincible. " There is just a Frenchman apiece for each English ship," said he to his assembled captains, " leaving me out

Arrival at Barbadoes.

of the question to fight the Spaniards; and when I haul down my colours, I expect every captain in the fleet to do the same, and not till then." With reference to the great superiority of the enemy, he afterwards observed: "Powerful as their force may be, they shall not with impunity make any great attacks. Mine is compact; their's must be unwieldy: and, though a very pretty fiddle, I don't believe that either Gravina or Villeneuve know how to play upon it."

Greater exertion was never made for an expeditious passage. Nelson calculated on gaining by it eight or ten days on the enemy, who had not less than thirty-five days' start of him. He made Madeira on the 15th of May, and on the 21st ran in twenty-four hours 190 miles. The next day the fleet passed the tropic, vulgarly called crossing the line, which was attended with the usual grotesque ceremonies. His lordship, who highly enjoyed the scene, remarks that in the Victory alone there were at least five hundred persons who had never before crossed the tropic. On the 4th, he reached Barbadoes, where he was joined by Admiral Cochrane in the Northumberland, and the Spartiate, Sir F. Laforey. Intelligence had been received that the enemy's fleet, consisting of 18 sail, had been seen on the 28th of May, from St. Lucia, steering to the southward; and great alarm was felt for the safety of Tobago and Trinidad. No one doubted the accuracy of this information excepting Nelson himself, who, on his opinion being overruled, replied, "If your intelligence proves false, you lose me the French fleet." Though he had not intended to anchor, yet this intelligence, supported by an offer from General Sir William Myers, commander-in-chief of the forces, to embark himself with 2000 men for the relief of Tobago and Trinidad, induced the admiral to work his ships

The Fleet proceed to Trinidad.

up to Carlisle Bay, and take the troops on board the same evening.

On the morning of the 5th, the fleet sailed from Barbadoes. The Curieux brig was sent to look into Tobago for information; a vessel was despatched to General Prevost at Dominica, to acquaint him with the admiral's arrival; Colonel Shipley of the engineers was directed to communicate with the nearest post on Trinidad, in order to ascertain the situation of the enemy; and signals were agreed upon to convey the earliest information on his return to the squadron. On the 6th, the fleet arrived off Tobago, where all was alarm and uncertainty, and where the following singular circumstance took place. A merchant, particularly anxious to ascertain whether the fleet was that of a friend or foe, had prevailed on his clerk, with whom he had agreed respecting signals, to embark in a schooner and stand towards it; and it unfortunately happened that the very signal made by the clerk corresponded with the affirmative signal, which had been agreed on by Colonel Shipley, of the enemy being at Trinidad. The master of an American merchant brig, spoken with the same day by the Curieux, and probably sent to mislead, also reported that he had been boarded by the enemy a few days before, off Grenada, standing towards Trinidad. No doubts were any longer entertained of the accuracy of the statement; the news flew throughout the British squadron: the ships were ready for action before day-break on the 7th, and Nelson anticipated in the Bay of Paria a second Aboukir.

To his inexpressible disappointment, he there learned that no enemy had been seen or heard of. At day-break on the 8th, an advice-boat from Barbadoes brought letters from Captain Morrice, giving an account of the capture of the Diamond Rock, and stating also that on the 4th the combined fleet had

Misery of Nelson at missing the Fleet.

not left Martinique, where they had been upwards of three weeks, but were expected to sail that night for the attack of Grenada. With an expedition of which there is perhaps no example, Nelson arrived on the 9th off Grenada, where a letter from General Prevost informed him that the enemy had passed Dominica on the 6th, standing to the northward. On the 8th they had passed to leeward of Antigua, still standing to the northward, and had that day taken a convoy of fourteen sugar-laden ships, which had left St. John's on the preceding night for England. Nelson, having on his passage communicated with Dominica, was off Montserrat on the 11th, and at sunset on the 12th anchored in St. John's, Antigua, to land the troops. The same evening, he sent the Curieux to England with despatches, and among them a letter to the Duke of Clarence. "Your royal highness," he says, "will easily conceive the misery I am feeling at hitherto having missed the French fleet, and entirely owing to false information. But for that information, I should have been off Port Royal as they were putting to sea; and our battle most probably would have been fought on the spot where the brave Rodney beat de Grasse. I am rather inclined to believe that they are pushing for Europe, to get out of our way, and the moment my mind is made up I shall stand for the Straits' mouth. But I must not move, after having saved these colonies and 200 and upwards of sugar-laden ships, until I feel sure they are gone My heart is almost broke; and, with my very serious complaints, I cannot expect long to go on."

There can be no doubt that, from old recollections, Nelson felt more than a common interest in the safety of our West India colonies. Writing to a commercial friend, Mr. Simon Taylor, of Jamaica, he says; "I was in a thousand fears for Jamaica,

Nelson's Anxiety for the Safety of the West Indies.

for that is a blow which Bonaparte would be happy to give us. I flew to the West Indies without any orders, but I think the ministry cannot be displeased. When I am satisfied that they are on their return, I shall push hard to get off the Straits' mouth before them; and kind Providence may some happy day bless my endeavours to serve the public weal, of which the West India colonies form so prominent and interesting a part. I have ever been, and shall die, a firm friend to our present colonial system. I was bred, as you know, in the good old school, and taught to appreciate the value of our West India possessions; and neither in the field nor in the senate shall their just rights be infringed, whilst I have an arm to fight in their defence, or a tongue to launch my voice."

Thus, in the short space of eight days, had this indefatigable officer secured our West India islands from that devastation and plunder with which they had been threatened by the powerful combined fleet of France and Spain; during which he had received on board and disembarked 2000 troops, and extended his protecting care to every island in the chain from Trinidad to St. Kitt's. The terror of his name had compelled them to flee before his very inferior force on the first tidings of his approach; and he immediately resolved, without a moment's delay, or any information of their route, to pursue them across the Atlantic, and trust to his own judgment to discover their destination. The combined fleet had been last seen standing to the northward: Nelson had made up his mind as to their course; and, in spite of the diversity of opinions on this subject, he adhered to his own, which was that the Spaniards were gone to the Havannah, and that the French would make either for Cadiz or Toulon.

In this persuasion he sailed on the 13th from Antigua,

Nelson Pursues the French to Europe.

in pursuit of the enemy, taking with him the Spartiate, Captain Sir F. Laforey. He confidently believed that by superior management he should be able to reach their own shores before them. Whenever opportunities offered for going on board the Victory, without causing delay to the squadron, he would occasionally call some of his captains to him. Although pleased to hear their opinions, he adhered to his own; and, in his turn, with his usual courtesy and frankness, assigned the reasons on which it was founded. In one of these unreserved conversations he thus expressed himself: "I am thankful that the enemy has been driven from our West India islands with so little loss to our country. I had made up my mind to great sacrifices; for I had determined, notwithstanding his vast superiority, to stop his career, and to put it out of his power to do any further mischief. Yet do not imagine I am one of those hot-brained people, who fight at immense disadvantage without an adequate object. My object is partly gained. If we meet them, we shall find them not less than eighteen, I rather think twenty, sail of the line, and therefore do not be surprised if I should not fall on them immediately. We won't part without a battle. I think they will be glad to let me alone, if I will let them alone; which I will do, either till we approach the shores of Europe or they give me an advantage too tempting to be resisted."

On the 18th, the Amazon spoke a schooner, which had, on the 15th at sunset, seen a fleet of 22 ships of war, steering to the northward. This could be no other than the combined fleet; and it was computed, from an examination of the then latitude and longitude of the schooner, that the enemy were, the night before, about 87 leagues distant. On the 19th the Martin was detached to Gibraltar, and the Decade to Lisbon, with information of the enemy's return. At

His Impatience to reach the Enemy.

this time, Nelson's anxiety was extreme, and his spirits were exceedingly depressed from what he had gone through. On the 21st there is in his diary this hasty note: "Midnight, nearly calm; saw three planks, which I think came from the French fleet. Very miserable, which is very foolish." At the beginning of July, the wind suddenly changed to n.e. with rain. "It appears hard," he exclaimed; "but as it pleases God. He knows what is best for us poor weak mortals." On the 8th of July but little progress was made. "We crawled," says the admiral, "33 miles the last twenty-four hours; my only hope is that the enemy's fleet are near us and in the same situation." At length, on the 17th, the fleet came in sight of Cape St. Vincent, "making," observes the admiral in his diary, "our whole run from Barbuda, day by day, 3459 miles. Our run from Cape St. Vincent to Barbadoes was 3227 miles, so that our run back was only 232 miles more than our run out, allowance being made for the difference of the latitudes and longitudes of Barbadoes and Barbuda—average per day 34 leagues, wanting 9 miles."

On the 18th, being in want of provisions, the admiral steered for the Straits' mouth, and was passed to the northward by the squadron under Admiral Collingwood, who during Nelson's absence had been stationed off Cadiz, and at first took the British fleet for that of the enemy. "Cape Spartel in sight," observed Nelson, "but no French fleet nor any information about them. How sorrowful this makes me! but I cannot help myself." On the 19th he bore up for Gibraltar Bay, and anchored, yet still without gaining any information of the enemy. On the 20th he remarks in his diary, "I went on shore for the first time since June 16, 1803, and from having my foot out of the Victory two years, wanting ten days."

Instance of Nelson's Sagacity.

The fleet, having watered in Mazari Bay, near Tcuan, again passed through the Straits, and proceeded off Cape St. Vincent, with the intention of going more to the northward, or acting as information might render expedient. Here a circumstance occurred, which, though trifling in itself, displayed the extraordinary sagacity of Lord Nelson. An American merchant ship, spoken by one of the frigates, had fallen in, a little to the westward of the Azores, with an armed vessel, having the appearance of a privateer, dismasted, and which bore evident marks of having been set on fire and run on board by another ship, whose stern had left an impression on the top sides. The crew had forsaken her, and the fire had probably gone out of itself. In the cabin had been found a log-book and a few seamen's jackets, which were given to the officer and taken on board the Victory. From these the admiral immediately endeavoured to draw some explanation, and to discover further intelligence of the enemy. The log book closed with this remark; "Two large ships in the w.n.w.," which showed in his opinion that the forsaken vessel had been a Liverpool privateer cruising off the Western Islands. Between the leaves of the log-book was found a small scrap of dirty paper, covered with figures, which no one could make any thing of. Nelson, as soon as he saw them, remarked, "They are French characters," which probably stimulated him to a stricter examination. "I can unravel the whole," said he at last. "This privateer had been chased and taken by the two ships that were seen in the w.n.w. The prize-master, who had been put on board in a hurry, omitted to take with him his reckoning; there is none in the log-book; and this dirty scrap of paper, which none of you could make any thing of, contains his work for the number of days since the privateer last left Corvo, with an accounted-for run,

Speculations on the Destination of the French.

which I take to be the chace, in his endeavour to find out his situation by back reckonings. The jackets I find to be the manufacture of France, which prove that the enemy was in possession of the privateer, and I conclude that by some mismanagement she was run on board of by one of them and dismantled. Not liking delay — for I am convinced that those two ships were the advanced ones of the French squadron — and fancying we were close at their heels, they set fire to the vessel and abandoned her in a hurry. If my explanation be correct, I infer from it that they are gone more to the northward; and more to the northward I will look for them.” Subsequent information confirmed the accuracy of all these conjectures.

The fleet accordingly stood more to the northward on the 3^d of August. Collingwood, in his letter to Nelson, congratulating him on his return, had given it as his opinion that Ireland was the real mark and but of the enemy's operations; and that their flight to the West Indies was intended only to take off that part of our naval force which was the greatest impediment to their undertaking. “They will now,” he continued, “liberate the Ferrol squadron from Calder, make the round of the Bay, and, taking the Rochfort people with them, will appear off Ushant, with perhaps 34 sail, there to be joined by 20 more. . . . Unless it be to bring their powerful fleets and armies to some great point of service, some rash attempt at conquest, they have only been subjecting them to chance of loss; which I do not believe the Corsican would do without the hope of an adequate reward.” Before Nelson had ascertained the real destination of the enemy on their leaving the Mediterranean, his attention had been directed to Ireland; and, well knowing the sound judgment and political sagacity of his friend Collingwood, he now resolved to seek his foes nearer home. He traversed the Bay

Nelson joins the Channel Fleet.

of Biscay, but foul winds and very unfavourable weather prevented him from pursuing his course, as he intended, to the west coast of Ireland. "I feel," says his diary, "every moment of this foul wind; but I trust in Providence it is all for the best: although I, a poor weak mortal, suffer severely with the mortification of so apparently long a passage as this will probably be, from the continuance of northerly winds." After some days the wind came more favourable, and he noticed the change in his diary, August 8, in a memorandum that may be useful to the seaman:—"In summer time, coming from the Mediterranean, you must not expect to lose the northerly wind, until you get into the longitude of 17° w." On the 12th of August he was informed by the Niobe, Captain Scott, three days from the Channel fleet, that no intelligence had been received of the enemy's arrival in any of the ports of the Bay of Biscay; neither had they been heard of on the Irish coast. He then determined to reinforce Admiral Cornwallis with his squadron, lest the combined fleet should, by approaching Brest, facilitate the escape of the force which that officer had so long blockaded there, or place him between two fires. On the 15th, the Channel fleet was discovered off Ushant; and, as soon as Nelson had joined it, he received orders to proceed with the Victory and Superb to Portsmouth.

On leaving his squadron, Nelson addressed the following hasty official communication, expressive of the estimation and regard which he entertained for his brave followers, to Admiral Louis—"I have only a moment to beg that you will be so good as to express, in the manner best calculated to do justice, the high sense I entertain of the merit of the captains, officers, and ships' companies, lately composing the squadron under my command; and assure their able

Sir R. Calder's Action with the Enemy.

and zealous commanders that their conduct has met my warmest approbation. I have only to repeat the high opinion I entertain of your distinguished conduct." The general regret that prevailed through the squadron on parting with such a chief was no more than might have been expected. "God bless you, my dear Nelson!" replied Louis; "would to Heaven you were with us! Believe me, the loss of you has been much felt. This instant all your old squadron's signals have been made to join the Prince of Wales."—"I look forward with pleasure," said his friend Hallowell, "to your resuming the command of us, to lead your old Mediterranean squadron to a victory, which will give much satisfaction to the country."

Though severely disappointed at missing the foe, whom, as he said, 'he had marked for his own game,' still his lordship had the satisfaction to learn that the advice which he sent home of their return from the West Indies had caused measures to be taken for intercepting the combined fleet. In consequence of this precaution, a squadron of fifteen sail of the line, under Sir Robert Calder, was cruising between Ferrol and Corunna, when, on the 22^d of July, the enemy appeared in sight. In spite of the superiority of numbers, the British admiral advanced to the attack. Filled with the tremendous idea of Lord Nelson, who, like a spectre, haunted the fugitives, Villeneuve and Gravina concluded that it was the squadron under his lordship which they had fallen in with. Under this impression, several of the French and Spanish ships at once bore down and attacked the Windsor Castle, 98, which they mistook for the flag-ship of the noble admiral himself. The San Raphael, 84, and El Fermo, 74, fell prizes to British prowess in this unequal contest. The unfavourable weather which ensued prevented the renewal of the action,

Nelson's Sentiments respecting that Action.

and gave the enemy an opportunity to escape first into Vigo, and afterwards into Ferrol.

The result of this action had proved far from satisfactory to the nation, which Nelson had taught to expect victories of a much more decisive character; and gave rise to disparaging comparisons, that annoyed the generous mind of his lordship perhaps as much as the commander to whose disadvantage they were made. On this subject, upon his arrival in the Channel, he thus expressed his feelings to Captain Fremantle. "I could not last night thank you for your kind letter, for I was in truth bewildered by the account of Sir Robert Calder's victory, and the joy of the event; together with the hearing that the nation was not content, which I am sorry for. Who can command all the success which our country may wish for? We have fought together, and therefore well know what it is. I have had the best disposed fleet of friends, but who can say what may be the event of a battle? And it most sincerely grieves me that in any of the papers it should be insinuated 'Lord Nelson could have done better.' I should have fought the enemy, so did my friend Calder. Who can promise that he will be more successful than another? I only wish to stand upon my own merits, and not by comparison one way or the other with the conduct of a brother officer." In writing to his brother William he again touched on this action. "We must not talk," he says, "of Sir Robert Calder's battle. I might not have done so much with so small a force. If I had fallen in with them, you would probably have been a lord before I wished; for I know they meant to make a dead set at the Victory."

On Nelson's arrival at Portsmouth on the 18th of August, an immense concourse of people, who had collected on the ramparts and other places, as soon

Nelson receives thanks from the West India Merchants.

as his flag was discovered, testified those feelings which officers like his lordship never fail to find in their grateful countrymen. During the approach of his barge and on his landing, he was greeted with loud and long continued acclamations. He immediately set out for London, where, on his appearance in public, similar tokens of admiration were lavished on the hero of the Nile, and the saviour of the West Indies. A few days afterwards a deputation from the West India merchants of the city of London, with their chairman, Sir Richard Neave at their head, presented to him an address expressive of their 'unfeigned thanks and high sense of his prompt determination in quitting the Mediterranean, of his sagacity in judging of and ascertaining the course of the combined fleet, and of his bold and unwearied pursuit of them to the West Indies and back again to Europe — all which had been very instrumental towards the safety of the West India islands in general, and well deserved the grateful acknowledgment of every individual connected with those colonies.' His lordship, in his reply, assured Sir Richard Neave that, from the state of defence in which the large islands were placed, with the number of regular troops and numerous well disciplined and zealous militia, he was confident that any troops which the combined fleet could carry would not make any impression upon them before a very superior force would arrive for their relief.

Mr. Elliot, in writing to Nelson from Naples, in the month of August, thus emphatically expressed his admiration of his late proceedings. "Either the distances between the different quarters of the globe are diminished," he says, "or you have extended the powers of human action. After an unremitting cruise of two long years in the stormy gulf of Lyons, to have proceeded without going into port to Alexan-

Mr. Elliot's Letter to Nelson.

dria, from Alexandria to the West Indies, from the West Indies back again to Gibraltar; to have kept your ships afloat, your rigging standing, and your crews in health and spirits — is an effort such as never was realised in former times, nor, I doubt, will ever again be repeated by any other admiral. You have protected us for two long years, and you saved the West Indies by only a few days.”

CHAPTER XII.

1805.

NELSON AT MERTON — HE IS RE-APPOINTED TO THE MEDITERRANEAN COMMAND — HIS PECUNIARY CIRCUMSTANCES — HE SAILS FROM PORTSMOUTH IN THE VICTORY — JOINS THE FLEET OFF CADIZ — COMMUNICATES HIS PLAN OF ATTACK — HIS METHOD OF STATIONING THE FLEET — HIS GENEROUS CONSIDERATION TOWARDS SIR ROBERT CALDER — DIRECTIONS ISSUED BY HIM IN EXPECTATION OF A BATTLE — THE COMBINED FLEET LEAVE CADIZ — PREPARATIONS FOR BATTLE — REMARKABLE TESTAMENTARY DOCUMENT — BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR — NELSON IS MORTALLY WOUNDED — HIS DEATH — HIS BODY IS BROUGHT TO ENGLAND — HIS FUNERAL — CONCLUSION.

NELSON WAS NOW resolved to recruit his health, and to enjoy a little leisure with his family and friends in his retreat at Merton. All his stores were accordingly removed from the Victory. His brother, his two sisters, and their families, were collected around him; and, when the Duke of Clarence dined with him at Merton, he assured his royal highness, pointing to his nephews and nieces who were seated at a separate table, that the sight of those young persons assembled under his roof constituted the chief happiness of his life. Short, however, was the interval during which he was permitted to enjoy this gratification. He had not been many days on shore, when Captain Blackwood arrived with the news that the combined fleet of the enemy, reinforced by two more Spanish squadrons, and now amounting to 34 sail of the line, had left Ferrol and got safely into Cadiz, where they were blocked up by Admiral Collingwood.

Captain Blackwood's Visit.

On his way to London with the despatches, Captain Blackwood called about five in the morning at Merton Place, where he found Nelson already up and dressed. "I am sure," he exclaimed, on seeing the captain, "you bring me news of the French and Spanish fleets, and I think I shall yet have to beat them." Blackwood in reply gave as briefly as possible all the information of which he was the bearer, and, after expressing his wish that he should witness the intended drubbing, he left Merton for the Admiralty. This intelligence made a deep impression on the mind of Nelson, which he endeavoured to disguise from those around him. All this, however, he said was nothing to him — "Let the man trudge it who has lost his budget," he added, with a forced gaiety, which did not escape the keen penetration of Lady Hamilton, any more than the deep thoughtfulness by which it was succeeded. In this state of mind he was pacing one of the walks in his garden, which he was accustomed to call the quarter-deck, when she joined him, and said that she perceived he was low and uneasy. "No," said he, smiling, "I am as happy as possible;" adding that he saw himself surrounded by his family; that he found his health improved since he had been at Merton; and that 'he would not give sixpence to call the king his uncle.' She replied that she did not believe what he said, and that she could tell what ailed him; that he was longing to get at those French and Spanish fleets, which he considered as his lawful property, and would be miserable if any other officer did the business; and therefore he must have them as the price of his long watching and the two years' hardships which he had gone through in the Mediterranean. "Nelson," said her ladyship, in concluding, "however we may lament your absence, and your leaving us so soon, offer your services immediately to go off Cadiz: they

Nelson re-appointed to the Mediterranean Command.

will be accepted, and you will gain a quiet heart by it. You will have a glorious victory, and then you may come hither, and take your repose and be happy." He looked at her in silence for some moments, and then with tears in his eyes exclaimed: "Brave Emma! good Emma! if there were more Emmas, there would be more Nelsons. You have penetrated my thoughts; I wish all you say, but was afraid to trust even myself with reflecting on the subject. However, I will go to town." He went accordingly; and, as his fair friend had foretold, his services were immediately accepted.

Lord Barham, then first Lord of the Admiralty, on receiving Nelson's journals of proceedings during his late command in the Mediterranean, had perused the whole with an attention which enabled him to form a more complete idea of the admiral's professional character; and he frankly acknowledged that he had not before sufficiently appreciated such extraordinary talents. This opinion he communicated to the Cabinet, with an assurance that unbounded confidence ought to be placed in Nelson, who was above all others the officer to be employed on the station which he had so ably watched, and the political relations of which he so thoroughly understood. Under this conviction, the Board not only accepted his lordship's services, but invested him with more extensive powers than were ever entrusted to any naval commander. He was directed to send home Sir Robert Calder, who had joined Collingwood off Cadiz, and to assume the chief command of all his majesty's ships and vessels throughout the whole of the Mediterranean; with full liberty to use his own discretion in following the enemy whithersoever he should think proper, without being liable to the slightest censure or control.

Nelson was received at the Admiralty by Lord

Nelson's Pecuniary Circumstances.

Barham, in a manner which corresponded with the opinion that he had given to ministers. The Navy List was put into his hands, and he was desired to choose his own officers. "Choose yourself, my lord," replied Nelson, returning the list; "the same spirit actuates the whole profession; you cannot choose wrong." Lord Barham then requested him to dictate without reserve to his secretary the names of such ships as he wished to have, in addition to the squadron then off Cadiz, promising that they should follow at short intervals, as soon as each was ready. "Have no scruple, Lord Nelson," said he; "there is my secretary. I will leave the room; give your orders to him; and, rely on it, they shall be implicitly obeyed by me." To this wise and liberal conduct it was owing that the Mediterranean fleet received constant reinforcements of ships, which, not sailing in a body, arrived at their destination unknown to the enemy.

During the few days that he passed in England after his appointment to this important command, Nelson devoted the little leisure which his professional preparations allowed to his beloved family and friends. The improvements which he had planned in his house and grounds were by no means completed; and, in order to pay some debts and provide the requisites for his equipment, he was necessitated to dispose of many jewels and valuable presents. Though his income was considerable, it was wholly inadequate to the greatness of his character. We have seen to what deductions he had rendered it liable for Lady Nelson and the widow of his brother Maurice. On numberless occasions, the public service was promoted by his private purse. For this the dukedom of Bronte had been mortgaged; that debt was further increased; so that he says, in October, 1803, it was then 8000 ounces (£8,800) in debt, be-

Nelson's Pecuniary Circumstances.

sides interest, and he did not expect to receive anything from that estate before the year 1805. Ever bountiful to indigent merit, his private benevolence was extensive; and both at sea and on shore he was liberal and hospitable to an unusual degree. Hence he had not been able conveniently to repay his brother-in-law, Mr. Matcham, £4000, which he had borrowed towards the purchase of Merton Place. In short, his circumstances were very inadequate to the due support of that dignity which he had acquired. Many naval commanders have enriched themselves by fortunate captures, attended with no personal hazard. All the prize-money that Nelson ever obtained was by hard fighting; and that was in general derived only from ships which his valour had reduced to wrecks of but little comparative value. Even then but a small portion fell to his share; as, both at the Nile and Copenhagen, he was under a commander-in-chief, who was entitled to prodigiously more than himself. Though he had lately held the chief command in the Mediterranean, yet the terror of his name, by confining the enemy to their ports, prevented its being very lucrative; while the peculiar nature of his situation, and the difficulties of obtaining intelligence, as well as requisite supplies, occasioned private expences, which materially abridged his emoluments. For himself he regretted not his straitened circumstances, but he felt them severely, as depriving him of the ability to make a suitable provision for those whom he conceived to have a claim on his protection. Neither had influence been exerted in their behalf with any very brilliant success. For his brother Maurice he had in vain solicited promotion; and his application for the post of a commissioner of the customs or excise for his brother-in-law, Mr. Bolton, had been productive of nothing but promises. His brother William, indeed, had been

Nelson's Presentiment of his Fate.

presented to a prebendal stall at Canterbury, but, with this exception, nothing had been given by government to Nelson's relatives, and very little to his principal friends. The claim of Lady Hamilton's pension, too, which he had so urgently enforced, was still unnoticed; and, during the few days that he remained in England, it does not appear to have been revived, probably on account of the changes in administration which had taken place while he was abroad, and the haste with which he was obliged to complete the arrangements for assuming his new command.

As the day approached for Nelson's departure from Merton Place, Lady Hamilton began to suffer severely for having advised the tender of his services. She afterwards declared that, as she loved his glory, she could not refrain from giving him such advice. Now, however, anticipating the fatal event that might be dreaded from his irrepressible valour and disdain of death, it is likely that she sincerely repented her zeal for his glory. The conviction that he would undoubtedly have fallen a prey to disappointment, had the desired victory been achieved by any other hand, was forgotten. Nelson himself was well aware that his post would be one of great personal danger, and appears to have entertained an idea that he should not survive the great conflict in which he expected soon to be engaged. Under this impression, he called at his upholsterer's in Brewer Street, where the coffin presented to him by Captain Hallowell had been deposited, and with his usual gaiety desired that the attestation of its identity should be engraved on the lid, "for," he added, "I think it highly probable that I may want it on my return."

The 13th of September was the day fixed for his departure. Some of his relatives had previously left Merton to escape the pain of such a separation. Mr. and Mrs. Matcham remained till the last. Nelson;

Departure from Merton.

kindly affectionate to all, had repeatedly declared that, from the first £30,000 in prize-money which he should be fortunate enough to obtain, he would make a present of £5000 to his brother, and the like sum to each of his sisters: and when Matcham expressed a wish that his lordship might retain the share destined for his wife, Nelson replied, "No; she has an equal claim with her other sister and my brother." The last thing he did was to repair to the chamber of his adopted daughter, who was asleep; and, after praying over her for a few minutes, he tore himself from his remaining relatives and Lady Hamilton, and at ten o'clock at night entered the chaise which was in waiting to convey him to Portsmouth. "Friday night," he wrote in his private journal, "I drove from dear, dear Merton, where I left all which I hold dear, to go and serve my king and country. May the great God whom I adore enable me to fulfil the expectations of my country! and if it is His good pleasure that I should return, my thanks will never cease being offered up to the throne of His mercy. If it is His good providence to cut short my days on earth, I bow with the greatest submission, relying that He will protect those so dear to me that I may leave behind. His will be done! Amen! Amen! Amen!"

On his arrival at Portsmouth, where his old ship the Victory had been again equipped to bear his flag, having arranged all his business with his accustomed expedition, he repaired to that part of the beach where the bathing machines are kept, for the purpose of embarking. Crowds of people collected around him, many of them in tears, falling on their knees before him, and blessing the favourite hero of the British nation. The affectionate heart of Nelson could not but sympathise in the general interest that was taken in his welfare. Turning to Captain Hardy,

Nelson sails in the *Victory* and joins the Fleet.

he observed, "I had their huzzas before; I have now their hearts." A fresh proof of the attachment of the common seamen to him was also exhibited. The crew of the *Superb*, Captain Keats, which, owing to necessary repairs, was not ready for sea, were heard expressing their desire that they might be turned over to some other ship in the harbour that was ready, in order to return with the admiral to the Mediterranean. Mr. Rose and Mr. Canning accompanied Lord Nelson to his ship, and dined with him on board, while the *Victory* was preparing to sail.

On the 15th at day-break, the *Victory* weighed in company with the *Euryalus*, Captain Blackwood; for, though five ships of the line and a frigate were then at sea and under orders to join his lordship, he resolved not to lose a moment in waiting for them. Working down Channel against a contrary wind, he was not off Plymouth till the 17th, when he sent the *Euryalus* to call out the *Ajax* and *Thunderer*. After encountering much blowing weather, the *Victory* arrived off Cadiz on the 29th of September, the admiral's birthday. He had previously detached the *Euryalus* to Admiral Collingwood with orders to put himself under Nelson's command, and a letter desiring that, if he should be in sight of Cadiz when the *Victory* joined, not only no salute might take place, but also no colours might be hoisted; that he would not have any salute if even out of sight of land; "for," says he, "it is as well not to proclaim to the enemy every ship which may join the fleet." He also wrote to General Fox at Gibraltar, requesting that the publisher of the Gibraltar Gazette should be forbidden to mention the force of the fleet, much less the names and strength of the ships; "for I much fear," added he, "that, if the enemy know of our increased numbers, we shall never see them out of Cadiz. If my arrival is necessary to be mentioned,

His Reception by the Officers.

the ships with me need not ; and it may be inserted that an equal number or some ships of Admiral Collingwood's are ordered home."

Writing to Lady Hamilton, he says : " I joined the fleet late on the evening of the 28th September, but could not communicate with them till next morning. I believe my arrival was most welcome, not only to the commander of the fleet, but also to every individual in it : and when I came to explain to them the *Nelson touch*, it was like an electric shock. ' It was new, it was singular, it was simple,' and from admirals downwards, it was repeated, ' It must succeed, if ever they will allow us to get at them.' " In another letter he described his reception as causing the sweetest sensation of his life. " The officers who came on board to welcome my return," he says, " forgot my rank as commander-in-chief, in the enthusiasm with which they greeted me. As soon as those emotions were past, I laid before them the Plan I had previously arranged for attacking the enemy, and it was my pleasure not only to find it generally approved, but clearly perceived and understood." This Plan—the *Nelson touch* of the letter just quoted—had been drawn up by his lordship during his pursuit of the French fleet in the West Indies, and contains the great duties of a British admiral on coming to action with an enemy. As the result of deep reflection on the part of so great an officer, who repeatedly led our brave seamen to victory, and having been written when chasing a superior force, which he had resolved not only to attack but to annihilate, its value to professional men is inestimable ; and to the general reader it will be interesting as giving a view of the ideas which Nelson entertained on resuming the Mediterranean command.

" The business of an English commander-in-chief being first to bring an enemy's fleet to battle on the

Nelson's Plan of Attack.

most advantageous terms to himself — I mean that of laying his ships close on board the enemy as expeditiously as possible — and, secondly, to continue them there without separating until the business is decided; I am sensible beyond this object it is not necessary I should say a word, being fully assured that the admirals and captains of the fleet I have the honour to command will, knowing my precise object — that of a close and decisive battle — supply any deficiency in my not making signals, which may, if extended beyond these objects, either be misunderstood, or, if waited for, very probably from various causes be impossible for the commander-in-chief to make: therefore it will only be requisite for me to state, in as few words as possible, the various modes in which it may be necessary for me to obtain my object, on which depends not only the honour and glory of our country, but, possibly, its safety, and with it that of all Europe, from French tyranny and oppression.

“If the two fleets are both willing to fight, but little manœuvring is necessary; the less the better; a day is soon lost in that business; therefore, I will only suppose that the enemy's fleet being to leeward, standing close upon a wind on the starboard tack, and that I am nearly ahead of them standing on the larboard tack, of course I should weather them. The weather must be supposed to be moderate; for, if it be a gale of wind, the manœuvring of both fleets is but of little avail, and probably no decisive action would take place with the whole fleet. Two modes present themselves: one to stand on, just out of gunshot, until the van ship of my line would be about the centre ship of the enemy; then make the signal to wear together; then bear up, engage with all our force the six or five van ships of the enemy, passing certainly, if opportunity offered, through their line.

Nelson's Plan of Attack.

This would prevent their bearing up, and the action, from the known bravery and conduct of the admirals and captains, would certainly be decisive: the second or third rear ships of the enemy would act as they please, and our ships would give a good account of them, should they persist in mixing with our ships. The other mode would be to stand under an easy and commanding sail directly for their headmost ship, so as to prevent the enemy from knowing whether I should pass to leeward or to windward of him. In that situation I would make the signal to engage the enemy to leeward, and to cut through their fleet about the sixth ship from the van, passing very close: they being on a wind, and you, going large, could cut their line when you please. The van ships of the enemy would, by the time our rear came abreast of their van ship, be severely cut up, and our van could not expect to escape damage. I would then have our rear ship and every ship in succession wear, continue the action with either the van ship or second ship, as it might appear most eligible from her crippled state; and, this mode pursued, I see nothing to prevent the capture of the five or six ships of the enemy's van. The two or three ships of the enemy's rear must either bear up or wear: and, in either case, although they would be in a better plight probably than our two van ships, (now the rear), yet they would be separated and at a distance to leeward, so as to give our ships time to refit; and, by that time, I believe, the battle would, from the judgment of the admiral and captains, be over with the rest of them. Signals, from these moments, are useless, when every man is disposed to do his duty. The great object is for us to support each other and to keep close to the enemy, and to leeward of him.

“ If the enemy are running away, then the only signals necessary will be, to engage the enemy as

His Method of Stationing the Fleet.

arriving up with them : and the other ships to pass on for the second, third, &c., giving if possible a close fire into the enemy in passing, taking care to give our ships engaged notice of your intention."

On joining the fleet, he resolved again to adopt the plan which he had followed off Toulon. He neither remained directly off Cadiz, nor within sight of the port. His great object was to induce the enemy to venture out. "Let them come out," he would often say. "My object is not to induce them by the display of all my force to remain in port, but to do every thing in my power to tempt them to come out." In pursuance of this design, he never kept all his fleet before Cadiz. This was the manner in which it was stationed — The *Euryalus* frigate was within half a mile of the mouth of the harbour, to watch the enemy's movements, and to give him the earliest intelligence. Off the harbour, but at a greater distance, he had about seven or eight sail of the line. He remained himself off Cape St. Mary, sixteen or eighteen leagues west of Cadiz, with the rest of his fleet, and a line of frigates extended and communicated between him and the seven or eight sail off Cadiz. The advantage of this plan was, that he could receive supplies and reinforcements off Cape St. Mary without the enemy's being informed of it, and thus they remained constantly ignorant of the real force under his command. Three or four additional sail of the line were sent out to him from England, but, from this judicious arrangement of his force, the enemy were not aware of the circumstance.

The state of Nelson's health on his joining the fleet was far from satisfactory. Only two days afterwards he wrote to Lady Hamilton : "I have had, about four o'clock this morning, (Oct. 1.) one of my dreadful spasms, which has almost enervated me. It is very odd ! I was hardly ever better than yesterday. Fre-

Nelson's Generous Feeling for Sir R. Calder.

mantle stayed with me till eight o'clock, and I slept uncommonly well, but was awoke with this disorder. My opinion of its effect, some one day, has never altered. However, it is entirely gone off, and I am only quite weak. The good people of England will not believe that rest of body and mind is necessary for me. But, perhaps, this spasm may not come again these six months. I had been writing seven hours yesterday: perhaps that had some hand in bringing it upon me."

One of his first duties as commander-in-chief was that of sending home Sir Robert Calder, which was a task peculiarly unpleasant to his feelings. Speaking on this subject to his confidential friends, "I had never," he said, "but two enemies in the profession that I know of, Sir Robert Calder and Sir John Orde; and I am not conscious of having given either of them any just cause of offence. However," added the generous Nelson, "I will at least endeavour to make Sir Robert love me." Accordingly, in communicating his orders to that officer, he advised him not to return home immediately, but to serve with himself on the glorious occasion which he anticipated, after which he could have nothing to apprehend from any trivial inquiry respecting what had previously happened. Sir Robert, however, though sensible of his lordship's kindness, was eager to meet the inquiry, and resolved not to delay his justification. Nelson, on learning his final determination, as a last proof of tenderness and respectful consideration for a brother officer so disagreeably situated, insisted on his returning to England, in his own 90-gun ship, instead of one of inferior force, as the Admiralty had directed, ill as the former could at that moment be spared from the station. In a letter to Lord Barham on this subject, he says, "Sir Robert felt so much, even at the idea of being removed from his

Nelson's Generous Feeling for Sir R. Calder.

own ship which he commanded, in the face of the fleet, that I much fear I shall incur the censure of the Board of Admiralty, without your lordship's influence with the members of it. I may be thought wrong as an officer to disobey the orders of the Admiralty, by not insisting on Sir Robert Calder's quitting the Prince of Wales for the Dreadnought, and for parting with a 90-gun ship, before the force arrives which their lordships have judged necessary. But I trust that I shall be considered to have done right as a man, and to a brother officer in affliction—my heart could not stand it, and so the thing must rest. I shall submit to the wisdom of the Board to censure me or not, as to them may seem best for the service: I shall bow with all due respect to their decision." This bright exemplification of the Christian precept to return good for evil is rendered still more striking by the fact that, after Nelson's glorious achievement in the battle off Cape St. Vincent, Sir Robert Calder advised that he should be brought to a court-martial for his deviation from superior orders; when the commander-in-chief, with a noble and generous disdain, replied, "Would you then try a man for knowing better how to act than yourself?" "Sir Robert is gone," observed Nelson, writing, just after his departure, to Captain Blackwood. "Poor fellow! I hope he will get well over the inquiry."

Nelson soon perceived that his best chance of forcing the enemy out of port was by want of provisions. He therefore determined to pursue the same line of conduct as Collingwood had done, and to intercept the supplies which the French were in the habit of sending in Danish vessels, called, of course, Danish property, to Ayamonte and other little ports in the bay, from Cape St. Mary to Algeiras. Without this measure, he contended, the blockade

Want of Frigates.

would be nugatory. He wrote to Lord Castlereagh for instructions on this point, lest his officers should get into a pecuniary scrape by obeying his orders, and begged to be informed as speedily as possible if ministers on the other hand "thought proper to allow the enemy's fleet to be victualled."

In all the operations in which this great officer was ever engaged, he seems to have been cramped by the want of frigates, which has indeed been the general complaint of all commanders of large fleets ever since the American war. Nelson did not fail to represent the effects of this evil to the members of the government. Writing to Lord Castlereagh, he says, "I have only two frigates to watch them, and not one with the fleet. I am most exceedingly anxious for more *eyes*, and hope the Admiralty are hastening them to me. The last fleet was lost to me for want of frigates — God forbid this should!" He called the attention of the first lord of the Admiralty to the same deficiency. "The French and Spanish ships," he says, "have taken the troops on board which had been landed on their arrival, and it is said that they mean to sail the first fresh Levant wind; and, as the Carthagena ships are ready, and, when seen a few days ago, had their topsail yards hoisted up, it looks like a junction. The position I have taken for this month is from sixteen to eighteen leagues west of Cadiz; for although it is desirable that the fleet should be well up in the easterly winds, yet I must guard against being caught with a westerly wind near Cadiz, as a fleet of ships with so many three-deckers would inevitably be forced into the Straits, and then Cadiz would be perfectly free for the enemy to come out with a westerly wind, as they served Lord Keith in the late war. I am most anxious for the arrival of frigates; less than eight, with the brigs, &c., as we settled, I find are

Want of Frigates.

absolutely inadequate for this service and to be with the fleet. And Capes Spartel, Cantin, or Blanco, and the Salvages, must be watched by fast-sailing vessels, in case any squadron should escape. I have been obliged to send six sail of the line to water and get stores at Tetuan and Gibraltar; for, if I did not begin, I should be very soon obliged to take the whole fleet into the Straits. I have 23 sail with me, and, should they come out, I shall immediately bring them to battle. But, although I should not doubt of spoiling any voyage they may attempt, yet I hope for the arrival of the ships from England, that, as an enemy's fleet, they may be annihilated." To the secretary of the Admiralty he also expressed his anxiety for the arrival of the promised frigates. "I am sorry ever to trouble their lordships with any thing like a complaint of a want of frigates and sloops; but, if the different services require them, and I have them not, those services must be neglected. I am taking all the frigates about me I possibly can; for, if I were an angel, and, attending to all the other points of my command, let the enemy escape for want of the *eyes of the fleet*, I should consider myself as most highly reprehensible. Never less than eight frigates, and three good fast-sailing brigs, should always be with the fleet to watch Cadiz; and to carry transports in and out to refit, it would take at least ten, and four brigs, to do that service well. At present I have only been able to collect two, which makes me very uneasy." "Ships," he afterwards observes, "are, I see, wanted every where; but the watching of the fleet in Cadiz is my first object."

Every day now brought fresh reason to expect that before it was over the enemy would put to sea. The anxiety of every officer was far surpassed by what the admiral endured. "I verily believe," he wrote to Mr. Rose, "that the country will soon be put to

Anticipations of Victory.

some expense on my account — either a monument, or a new pension and honours; for I have not the smallest doubt but that a very few days, almost hours, will put us in battle. The success no man can ensure; but for the fighting them, if they are to be got at, I pledge myself; and I am very, very, very anxious for the arrival of the force intended; for the thing will be done, if a few more days elapse, and I want, for the sake of our country, that it should be done so effectually as to leave nothing to wish for; and what will signify the force the day after the battle! It is, as Mr. Pitt knows, *annihilation* that the country wants, and not merely a splendid victory of 23 to 36 — honourable to the parties concerned, but absolutely useless in the extended scale to bring Bonaparte to his marrow-bones. Numbers only can annihilate. I think not for myself, but my country." Throughout the whole day and frequently the night also did this great officer give his unwearied attention to the complicated objects which his command at that critical moment more particularly embraced. His mind was every where, passing, with a rapidity almost superhuman, through every circumstance of duty, and forming accurate conceptions of the intentions of the enemy. "You may rely on it," said he, "they will come out and fight, if forced to battle." He never went to his short and disturbed rest without considering and providing for the contingencies of the night. "With this swell," he thus wrote to Admiral Collingwood on the 6th, "I think we had better, at half-past four or five o'clock, make the signal for all boats to repair on board; and to keep the wind under three topsails and fore-sail for the night, and direct the ships with the transports in tow to keep to windward — this clear night we need not mind the order of sailing, even if we want to wear in the night. Should the swell get up before the evening, telegraph

State of the Enemy's Fleet in Cadiz.

me, and the boats shall be hoisted in, and we will make sail." "Telegraph me, my dear Collingwood," said he in another letter, "upon all occasions, without ceremony. We are one, and I hope ever shall be." To Mr. Elliot he observed: "With the business of such a fleet, I am not very idle; therefore, if I only write what is most interesting for you to know, you must excuse the other kind of writing."

On the 8th of October, Captain Blackwood, who had been stationed off the mouth of the harbour of Cadiz ever since Nelson's arrival, was joined by the *Phoebe* frigate and the *Weasel* sloop. This was the first day since he had been thus engaged that he had enjoyed a sufficiently commanding breeze to reconnoitre the force of the enemy. It was found to consist of 34 sail of the line, three of which were three-deckers, with five frigates, one corvette, and three brigs. Six admirals' flags were flying. The ships had their top-gallant yards up and sails bent. The *Pickle* schooner was immediately despatched with this intelligence to the fleet. Nelson, writing that day to the Hon. Brigadier-general Stewart, said, "I have 34 sail of the line looking me in the face: unfortunately, there is a strip of land between us, but it is believed they will come to sea in a few days. The sooner the better — I don't like to have these things on my mind; and if I see my way through the fiery ordeal, I shall go home and rest for the winter."

Admiral Louis having been sent with the ships composing the advanced squadron to Gibraltar to procure a supply of water, Captain Duff, of the *Mars*, succeeded to that command, having with him, besides his own ship, the *Defence*, *Colossus*, and *Ajax*. Captain Duff, in writing to his wife, said of Nelson, "He is certainly the pleasantest admiral I ever served under. He is so good a man that we all wish to do

Theatricals in the Fleet.

what he likes without any kind of orders. I have been employed for this week past to paint the ship after the Nelson mode, which most of the fleet are doing." According to this mode, the ships were painted as usual with two yellow streaks, but the port-holes were black; which gave them the appearance of being chequered. On the 9th, according to the admiral's diary, he sent the Nelson mode to his friend Collingwood; and such were the high spirits and good-humour that prevailed throughout the fleet then daily expecting a desperate battle with a superior force, that their evenings were often spent in attending the theatrical performances which were exhibited in almost every ship — a species of amusement which had been encouraged by the admiral so long before as when he was Captain of the *Boreas*, in the West Indies. These performances contributed to keep up the cheerfulness and health of the men, and generally concluded about a quarter before eight with God save the King.*

On the 9th, Nelson, being then 19 leagues from Cadiz, wrote to the captain of the *Euryalus*, "Let us have them out, my dear Blackwood. Agamemnon,

* That some of these performances would have done no discredit to the regular stage, may be inferred from the following spirited passage in an original Prologue delivered during this blockade of Cadiz, on board the *Britannia*, Lord Northesk, who was present:—

Yes, he foresees — confirm his prospects, Heaven! —
 Yon cooped-up boasters to your wishes given;
 Sees their proud ensigns from their standards torn,
 Their vanquish'd navies in our triumph borne;
 Sees added laurels grace our Nelson's brow,
 And victory hovering o'er his glowing prow,
 His conquering banners o'er the waves unfurl'd,
 And Britain's thunder rule the watery world!
 If aught of prescience to the Muse belong,
 Soon, soon the scenes that animate her song
 In glowing colours shall salute your eyes,
 And Heav'n shall bid th' auspicious morn arise

Speculations on the Enemy's Intentions.

Belleisle, and Superb, and very probably London, are this moment on their passage; therefore, if Mr. Decrès means to come forth, if he would take my advice, (which I dare say he will not) he had better come out directly." Nelson had not then learned that Villeneuve commanded. "They," he added, "who know more of Cadiz than you or I do, say that after these Levanters come several days of fine weather, westerly winds, fine sea-breezes, and a land-wind at night; and, that if the enemy are bound into the Mediterranean, they would come out in the night, which they have always done, placing lights on the Porpoises and the Diamond, and the shoal off Cadiz, run to the southward, and catch the sea-breeze off the mouth of the Gut, and push through, whilst we might have little wind in the offing. In short, watch all points, and all winds and weathers." Writing on the same day to Collingwood, he says: "I send you my plan of attack, as far as a man dare venture to guess at the very uncertain position the enemy may be found in. But, my dear friend, it is to place you perfectly at ease respecting my intentions, and to give full scope to your judgment for carrying them into effect. We can, my dear Coll, have no little jealousies. We have only one great object in view, that of annihilating our enemies and getting a glorious peace for our country. No man has more confidence than I have in you, and no man will render your services more justice than your very old friend, Nelson and Bronte."

No commander ever left less to chance than Nelson. His operations were the result of mature reflection, guided by a soundness of judgment which has never been surpassed. He was the first who reduced the system of naval warfare to a science, and who, by the judicious arrangement of his plans, invariably secured victory before a blow was struck. To

Nelson's Instructions to his Officers.

the minds of naval men in particular, the luminous directions issued by him in the plan of attack referred to in the preceding letter must carry conviction of the truth of these observations. They were conveyed to the different officers under his command in the following

“ MEMORANDUM.

“ Victory, off Cadiz, Oct. 10, 1805.

“ Thinking it almost impossible to bring a fleet of forty sail of the line into battle, in variable winds, thick weather, and other circumstances which must occur, without such a loss of time that the opportunity would probably be lost of bringing the enemy to battle in such a manner as to make the business decisive; I have therefore made up my mind to keep the fleet in that position of sailing, with the exception of the first and second in command, that the order of sailing is to be the order of battle; placing the fleet in two lines, of sixteen ships each, with an advanced squadron of eight of the fastest sailing two-decked ships, which will always make, if wanted, a line of twenty-four sail, on whichever line the commander-in-chief may direct. The second in command will, after my intentions are made known to him, have the entire direction of his line, to make the attack upon the enemy, and to follow up the blow until they are captured or destroyed. If the enemy's fleet should be seen to windward, in line of battle, and that the two lines and advanced squadron could fetch them, they will probably be so extended, that their van could not succour their rear. I should therefore probably make the second in command's signal, to lead through about the twelfth ship from their rear, or wherever he could fetch, if not able to get so far advanced. My line would lead through about their centre, and the advanced squadron, two

Nelson's Instructions to his Officers.

or three, or four, ships ahead of their centre, so as to ensure getting at their commander-in-chief, whom every effort must be made to capture.—The whole impression of the British fleet must be to overpower from two or three ships ahead of their commander-in-chief, supposed to be in the centre, to the rear of their fleet. I will suppose 20 sail of the line to be untouched; it must be some time before they could perform a manœuvre to bring their force compact to attack any part of the British fleet engaged, or succour their own ships, which, indeed, would be impossible without mixing with the ships engaged. The enemy's fleet is supposed to consist of 46 sail of the line, British fleet of 40. If either be less, only a proportionate number of the enemy's ships are to be cut off; British to be one-fourth superior to the enemy cut off. Something must be left to chance; nothing is sure in a sea-fight beyond all others. Shots will carry away the masts and yards of friends as well as foes; but I look with confidence to a victory before the van of the enemy could succour their rear, and then that the British fleet would be ready to receive their 20 sail of the line, or to pursue them should they endeavour to make off. If the van of the enemy tacks, the captured ships must run to leeward of the British fleet. If the enemy wears, the British must place themselves between the enemy and the captured and the disabled British ships; and, should the enemy close, I have no fears as to the result. The second in command will, in all possible things, direct the movements of his line, by keeping them as compact as the nature of circumstances will admit. Captains are to look to their particular line as their rallying point; but, in case signals can neither be seen nor perfectly understood, *no captain can do very wrong if he places his ship alongside that of an enemy.*

 Nelson's Instructions to his Officers.

"Of the intended attack from to windward, the enemy in line of battle ready to receive an attack.

_____ }
 _____ } British.
 _____ }

_____ Enemy.

"The divisions of the British fleet will be brought nearly within gun-shot of the enemy's centre; the signal will most probably then be made for the lee-line to bear up together, to set all their sails, even their steering sails, in order to get as quickly as possible to the enemy's line, and to cut through, beginning at the twelfth ship from the enemy's rear. Some ships may not get through their exact place; but they will always be at hand to assist their friends. If any are thrown in the rear of the enemy, they would effectually complete the business of 12 sail of the enemy. Should the enemy wear together or bear up and sail large, still the 12 ships, composing in the first position the enemy's rear, are to be the object of attack of the lee-line, unless otherwise directed from the commander-in-chief: which is scarcely to be expected, as the entire management of the lee-line, after the intentions of the commander-in-chief are signified, is intended to be left to the judgment of the admiral commanding that line. The remainder of the enemy's fleet, 34 sail, are to be left to the management of the commander-in-chief, who will endeavour to take care that the movements of the second in command are as little interrupted as possible."

These instructions were issued on the 10th, on which day also copies of some standing orders, consisting of his last directions to the fleet, were passed from ship to ship, to be signed by every captain, and returned to the Victory. One of these directed the supply of fresh provisions and vegetables for the

Nelson's last Directions to the Fleet.

seamen whenever they could be procured, in accordance with that uniform attention which he had paid to their health and comforts. Another enjoined that the name and family of every officer, seaman, and marine, who should be killed or wounded in action with the enemy, on board any of the ships or vessels under his command, should be returned to him as soon after the circumstance as the service should admit, in order that he might transmit it to the chairman of the Patriotic Fund at Lloyd's Coffee House, that the case of the relations of those who had fallen in the cause of their country might be taken into consideration. The different divisions of the fleet were also required by one of these orders to bear the white or St. George's ensign, being his own colours, in order to prevent confusion from a variety of flags, and to hoist union jacks at the foretop galleant stay of each ship, as a distinction.

On the same day, Nelson wrote to Captain Blackwood, desiring to be informed of every movement of the enemy, who were then actually almost out of the harbour. "I rely," said he, "that we cannot miss getting hold of them, and I will give them such a shaking as they never yet experienced — at least, I will lay down my life in the attempt. We are a very powerful fleet, and not to be had cheap." To his second in command he said: "My dear Coll, the enemy's fleet is all but out of the harbour; perhaps this night, with the northerly wind, they may come forth, and with the westerly sea-breeze to-morrow go into the Mediterranean." During the ensuing night it blew so strong at north-west, that the enemy could not venture to get under way; and their continuing thus in port rendered the situation of the blockading fleet extremely critical; as Nelson had been led by a letter from Admiral Young to believe that, if the enemy did not soon sail, he might reason-

Mode of Stationing the Fleet.

ably expect the Brest fleet. "I must, therefore," he observed, in writing to that officer, "try and annihilate them, before the Cadiz fleet can join."

On the following day, in a letter to Sir A. Ball, Nelson described the manner in which he had stationed his ships. "I have," said he, "five frigates, a brig, and a schooner, watching them closely, an advanced squadron of fast-sailing ships between me and the frigates, and the body of the fleet from 15 to 18 leagues west of Cadiz. I am aware there will be moments when it might be wished we were closer; but I have considered all possible circumstances, and believe there will often be times, in strong gales of westerly wind, when we may even wish ourselves further off, as we shall be in danger of being driven into the Mediterranean; when, if they choose to go westward, there will be no interruption. However, whether I am right or wrong, I act from the best of my judgment."

That presentiment of his fate, which seems to have been fixed in his mind, ever since his assuming the command of this station, was strongly expressed about this time, in the last letter which he ever wrote to his old friend Davison. "Day by day," says he, "my dear friend, I am expecting the fleet to put to sea — every day, hour, and moment; and you may rely that, if it is within the power of man to get at them, it shall be done; and I am sure that all my brethren look to that day as the finish of our laborious cruise. The event no man can say exactly; but I must think, or render great injustice to those under me, that, let the battle be when it may, it will never have been surpassed. My shattered frame, if I survive that day, will require rest, and that is all I shall ask for. If I fall on such a glorious occasion, it shall be my pride to take care that my friends shall not blush for me: these things are in the hands of a

Anticipations of a Battle.

wise and just Providence, and His will be done! I have got some trifle, thank God, to leave to those I hold most dear, and I have taken care not to neglect it. Do not think I am low-spirited on this account, or fancy any thing is to happen to me; quite the contrary. My mind is calm, and I have only to think of destroying our inveterate foe. I have two frigates gone for more information; and we all hope for a meeting with the enemy. Nothing can be finer than the fleet under my command. Whatever be the event, believe me ever, my dear Davison, your much obliged and sincere friend."

Nelson daily experienced the advantage of the station which he had determined to keep, 16 or 18 leagues to the westward of Cadiz: for, although it was possible that the combined fleet might get a few leagues before him into the Mediterranean, yet that inconvenience could not be put in competition with the chance of his own being driven through the Straits. He ardently wished that he could have changed some of his ships for others which were better sailers. He knew that the enemy must ere long move from Cadiz; and they might not volunteer an action. "I own," said he to Lord Barham, "I long for faster sailing ships, and, if not three-deckers, two [deckers] alongside an enemy are better than three-deckers a great way off."

Whilst Nelson was thus watching, with the utmost anxiety, every movement of the enemy in Cadiz, the Rochfort squadron had not only sailed, but taken the Calcutta and most of her convoy of South Sea whalers, and chased very hard the Agamemnon and L'Aimable on their way to join his fleet: and his lordship thought it by no means improbable that this squadron might proceed to the southward and enter the Mediterranean. His fleet was at this time very short of men, and the crews had in consequence more labo-

Nelson's Preparations for Battle.

enemy N.N.E. The frigates and look-out ships kept sight of the enemy most admirably all night, and told me by signals which tack they were upon. At eight P.M. we wore, and stood to the S.W., and at four A.M. stood to the N.E."

Nelson passed the night as he had formerly done that before the battle of Copenhagen: and his rest was short and interrupted. The enemies of his country were now almost within his reach; he knew that in the impending conflict his ship would be the particular object of their fury, and he could scarcely expect to pass through the fiery ordeal in safety. The 21st of October had been a memorable day in his family, because on that day his uncle, Captain Suckling, in the Dreadnought, had with two other ships of the line beaten off a French squadron of four sail of the line and three frigates. With a feeling from which the greatest minds are not exempt, he concluded that it was destined to be the day of his battle also; and he prepared himself for the issue, whatever it might be. He rose by break of day, when the combined fleet was distinctly seen from the Victory's deck, formed in a close line of battle ahead, on the starboard tack, about 12 miles to leeward, standing to the south. He put on what he called his fighting coat,* which he had so often worn in battle, and which he preserved with a degree of veneration. The insignia of the various splendid honours which he had received from foreign potentates were plainly worked upon it; and he resolved that the Star of the Order of the Bath, which he had always particularly prized as the free gift of his own sovereign, should appear in the battle and be nearest to his heart in case of his fall. To the remonstrances of his friends, who feared that these badges of honour might mark

* This coat is, I believe, preserved in a glass case in the Painted Hall, Greenwich.—THE OLD SAILOR.

Testamentary Document.

him out to the enemy, and wished him to exchange that coat for another, he replied, "No, in honour I gained them, in honour I will die in them."

At seven o'clock, the enemy wearing in succession, he committed himself to the providence of God in the following admirable prayer, which appears in his diary: "May the great God whom I worship grant to my country, and for the benefit of Europe in general, a great and glorious victory; and may no misconduct in any one tarnish it; and may humanity after victory be the predominant feature in the British fleet! For myself individually, I commit my life to Him who made me, and may His blessing light upon my endeavours for serving my country faithfully! To Him I resign myself and the just cause which is entrusted to me to defend. Amen! Amen! Amen!"

Mindful, on this solemn occasion, of the objects of his fondest attachment, who, in case of that death which he evidently anticipated, would be left without protection, he introduced also in his private journal the following testamentary document, being the last words that he ever wrote:—

"October 21st, 1805, then in sight of the combined fleets of France and Spain, distant about ten miles.

"Whereas the eminent services of Emma Hamilton, widow of the Rt. Hon. Sir William Hamilton, have been of the very greatest service to our king and country, to my knowledge, without her receiving any reward from either our king or our country—First, that she obtained the king of Spain's letter, in 1796, to his brother the king of Naples, acquainting him of his intention to declare war against England; from which letter the ministry sent out orders to the then Sir John Jervis to strike a stroke, if opportunity offered, against either the arsenals of Spain or her fleets; that neither of these was done is not the

Testamentary Document.

fault of Lady Hamilton : the opportunity might have been offered—Secondly, the British fleet under my command could never have returned the second time to Egypt, had not Lady Hamilton's influence with the queen caused letters to be wrote to the governor of Syracuse, that he was to encourage the fleet being supplied with every thing, should they put into any port in Sicily. We put into Syracuse, and received every supply; went to Egypt and destroyed the French fleet.—Could I have rewarded these services, I would not now call upon my country. But, as that has not been in my power, I leave Emma Hamilton, therefore, as a legacy to my king and country, that they will give her an ample provision to maintain her rank in life. I also leave to the beneficence of my country my adopted daughter, Horatia Nelson Thompson; and I desire she will use in future the name of Nelson only; These are the only favours I ask of my king and country, at this moment when I am going to fight their battle. May God bless my king and country and all those I hold dear! My relations it is needless to mention; they will of course be amply provided for." This he signed with his own name, and it was witnessed, at his desire, by Captain Hardy and Captain Blackwood. On leaving his cabin, the admiral went over the different decks, speaking to and encouraging the men with his usual affability, and seeing that the preparations for battle were complete throughout the ship. As he ascended the quarter-deck ladder, he was greeted with three cheers.

Captain Blackwood, after watching the enemy all night, had been ordered by signal at six in the morning to repair on board the Victory. He found the admiral in good but very calm spirits, and congratulated him on the approach of the moment which he had so long and so ardently wished for. Nelson's

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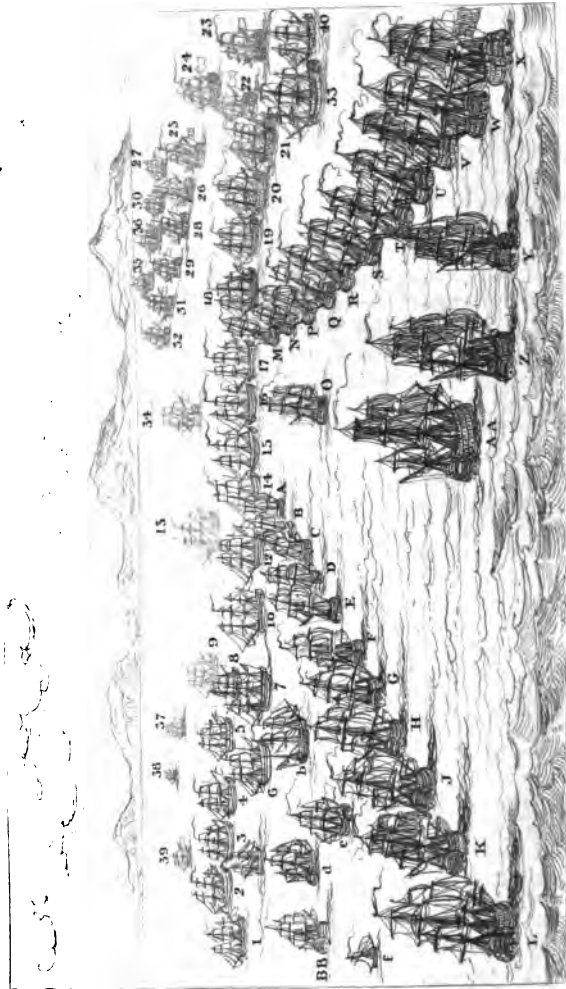
Nelson's Conversation with Captain Blackwood.

reply was, "I mean to-day to bleed the captains of the frigates; so I shall keep you on board till the very last minute." His mind seemed to be entirely directed to the strength and formation of the enemy's line, as well as to the effect which his novel mode of attack was likely to produce; and he expressed some disappointment that the enemy tacked to the northward and formed their line on the larboard instead of the starboard tack, which latter line of bearing would have kept the Straits' mouth open. On the other hand, by forming to the northward, they brought the shoals of Trafalgar and St. Pedro under the lee of the British fleet, and, with the existing wind, kept open the port of Cadiz, which was of infinite consequence to them. This movement was in a great degree the cause of Nelson's afterwards making the signal to anchor, the necessity of which was impressed upon his mind to the last moment of his life; and so much did he apprehend the possibility of the enemy's escape into Cadiz, that he desired Captain Blackwood to employ the frigates as much as he could in completing the destruction of their ships, whether at anchor or not, and not to think of saving ships or men — for annihilation to both was his first object, and capture but a secondary one. In the five hours and a half that Blackwood remained on board, during which he was not ten minutes from Nelson's side, his lordship frequently asked what he should consider as a victory; the certainty of which he seemed never for an instant to doubt, although, from the situation of the land, he questioned the possibility of preserving the prizes that might be taken. The captain answered that, considering the handsome way in which the enemy offered battle, their apparent determination for a fair trial of strength, and the proximity of the land, he thought, if fourteen ships were captured, it would be a glorious result. Nel-

Nelson's last Signal to the Fleet.

son always replied: "I shall not be satisfied with any thing short of twenty." We shall see that both in regard to the number and the difficulty of preserving the prizes, the result so exactly corresponded with his anticipations, that one would almost suppose this extraordinary man to have been endowed with the gift of prescience. A telegraphic signal was made to denote that he intended to break through the rear of the enemy's line, to prevent their getting into Cadiz; after which, when Captain Blackwood was walking with him on the poop, he said, "I'll now amuse the fleet with a signal"—at the same time asking if he did not think there was one yet wanting. The captain answered that he thought the whole of the fleet seemed very clearly to understand what they were about, and to vie with each other who should first get nearest to the Victory or the Royal Sovereign, which bore the flag of admiral Collingwood, the second in command. These words were scarcely uttered when he made his last signal—a signal that can never be forgotten as long as the English navy and the English language exists—**ENGLAND EXPECTS EVERY MAN WILL DO HIS DUTY.** The shout with which it was received throughout the fleet was sublime. "Now," said Nelson, "I can do no more. We must trust to the Great Disposer of all events and the justice of our cause. I thank God for this great opportunity of doing my duty."

The wind was light, from the south-west, and a long swell was setting into the Bay of Cadiz, so that our ships, like sovereigns of the ocean, moved majestically before it, each crowding all sail possible, and falling into her station according to her rate of going. About seven o'clock, the enemy wore, and then stood in a close line on the larboard tack towards Cadiz. The sun shone brightly on their sails,



Plan of the Battle of TRAFALGAR.

British Line of Battle.

and, from the number of three-deckers among them, they made a most formidable appearance, which, however, so far from appalling our brave fellows, merely suggested the observation: "What a fine sight those ships would make at Spithead!" Nelson himself, when he felt convinced that the enemy could not avoid an engagement, displayed the highest degree of animation; and, turning to Captain Hardy and the other officers around him, he exclaimed: "They cannot now escape us! I think we shall make sure of at least twenty of them. I may probably lose a leg; but that will be purchasing a victory cheaply."

The relative strength of the hostile fleets was as follows. The references to the respective ships correspond with those in the annexed engraving, which represents the situation of the two fleets at the moment of commencing the action.

BRITISH FLEET.

VAN.

Ships.	Guns.	Commanders.
A. Victory	110	{ Admiral Lord Nelson. Captain T. M. Hardy.
B. Temeraire	98	
C. Neptune	98	——— E. Harvey. ——— T. F. Fremantle.
D. Britannia	100	{ Rear-Adm. Earl of Northesk. Captain C. Bullen.
E. Leviathan	74	
F. Conqueror	74	——— H. W. Bayntun. ——— I. Pellew.
G. Agamemnon	64	——— Sir E. Berry.
H. Ajax	74	——— *J. Piffold.
I. Orion	74	——— C. Codrington.
K. Minotaur	74	——— C. J. M. Mansfield.
L. Spartiate	74	——— Sir F. Laforey.
X. Defiance	74	——— P. C. Durham.
Z. Prince	98	——— R. Grindall.
AA. Dreadnought	98	——— J. Conn.
BB. Africa	64	——— H. Digby.

Combined French and Spanish Fleet.

REAR.		
Ships.	Guns.	Commanders.
M. Royal Sovereign	100	{ Vice-Admiral Collingwood. Captain E. Rotherham.
N. Belleisle	74	— W. Hargood.
O. Colossus	74	— J. N. Morris.
P. Mars	74	— G. Duff.
Q. Tonnant	80	— C. Tyler.
R. Bellerophon	74	— J. Cooke.
S. Achille	74	— R. King.
T. Polyphemus	64	— R. Redmill.
U. Revenge	74	— H. R. Moorsom.
V. Swiftsure	74	— W. G. Rutherford.
W. Defence	74	— Geo. Hope.
Y. Thunderer	74	— *J. Stockham.
a. Euryalus	36	— Hon. H. Blackwood.
b. Sirius	36	— W. Prowse.
c. Phoebe	36	— Hon. T. B. Capel.
d. Naiad	36	— Parker
e. Pickle	10	Lieut. J. R. Lapenotiere.
f. Entrepreneante	10	— J. Puyer.

* Senior lieutenants Pilfold, of the Ajax, and Stockham, of the Thunderer, commanded in the place of Captains Brown and Lechmere, called home to give evidence on the inquiry into the conduct of Sir R. Calder.

COMBINED FRENCH AND SPANISH FLEET.

SPANISH.		
Ships.	Guns.	Commanders.
10 Santissima Trinidad	136	{ Rear-Admiral Don Baltaser Cisneros. Brigadier Don F. Uriarte.
29 Principe de Asturias	112	Admiral Don F. Gravina.
26 Argonauta	80	Capt. Don Antonio Escano.
1 Neptuno	84	— Don Antonio Parejo.
17 Santa Anna	112	{ — Brig. Don C. Valdez. Vice-Admiral Don Ignatio D'Aliva.
6 Rayo	100	Capt. Don Joseph de Gardoqui.
32 Montannez	74	Brig. Don Henrique M'Donel.
19 Monarca	74	Captain Don F. Alcedo.
23 St. Juan Nepomuceno	74	— Don T. Argumosa.
8 San Francisco de Assisi	74	— Brig Don C. Churruca.
		— Don Louis de Flores.

Combined French and Spanish Fleet.

30	Bahama	74	— Brig Don A. D. Galiano.
11	San Justo	74	— Don Miguel Gaston.
15	San Leandro	64	— Don Jos. de Quevedo.
3	San Augustino	74	— Brig Don F. X. Cagigal.
33	San Ildefonso	74	— Don Jos. de Vargas.
	Flora	44	
	Mercurio	24	

FRENCH.

12	Le Bucentaure	80	{ Admiral Villeneuve. Captain Prigny. — Majendie.
4	Le Formidable	80	{ Rear-Admiral Dumanoir. Captain Marchand.
25	L'Algeziras	74	{ Rear-Admiral Magon. Captain Bruard.
16	L'Indomptable	84	— Hubert.
13	Le Neptune	84	— Maistral.
20	Le Pluton	74	— Cosmas.
5	Le Mont Blanc	74	— le Villegries.
28	Le Swiftsure	74	— Villemadrin.
2	Le Scipion	74	— Berenger.
24	Le Berwick	74	— Camas.
21	L'Intrepide	74	— Infortet.
31	L'Aigle	74	— Courrage.
9	L'Heros	74	— Poulain.
18	Le Fougueux	74	— Baudouin.
7	Le Du Guay Trouin	74	— Touffet.
22	L'Argonaute	74	— Epron.
14	Le Redoubtable	74	— Lucas.
27	L'Achille	74	— de Nieuport.
40	L'Hermione	40	
37	L'Hortumne	40	
39	La Cornelié	40	
36	La Tamise	40	
34	Le Rhin	40	
35	L'Argus	16	
38	Le Ferrete	18	
	L'Observateur	18	

Admiral Villeneuve had sailed from Cadiz with the determination of giving battle to the English fleet, though contrary to the instructions of Bonaparte, whose intention it was that the combined fleet

Motives of Villeneuve for giving battle.

should sail from Cadiz, form a junction with the Carthagena squadron, and proceed to Toulon; so that, in case any reverse of fortune should tempt the Spanish government to throw off his yoke, he might have the greatest part of their navy in his power. The admiral is supposed to have been impelled by motives of personal resentment and wounded honour to act in opposition to this plan. Bonaparte and his official paper had made severe remarks on his conduct in the engagement with Sir R. Calder; and the Spaniards themselves had openly upbraided him with not supporting them on that occasion. He knew, moreover, that Admiral Rosilly was coming to supersede him, and hoped, before he came, to wipe off every supposed stain on his conduct by a victory over an enemy whom he supposed to be far inferior in force to what they really were. Ignorant of the reinforcement which the British fleet had received from England, he was confirmed in his resolution to put to sea by the intelligence that Admiral Louis was then absent with six sail of the line, supposing the fleet off Cadiz to be thus reduced to twenty-one sail. Neither was he certain that the latter was commanded by the dreaded Nelson; for an American had reported that he could not possibly be with the blockading fleet, as he had been seen only a few days before in London. Every precaution was taken to ensure success. Four thousand choice troops under General Contamin in the *Bucentaure* were distributed throughout the combined fleet; among these were many of the most skilful sharpshooters and Tyrolese riflemen; and the French ships were furnished with all sorts of fire-balls and other combustibles to be thrown into the English ships, in hopes of being able either to burn them, or to produce such confusion as might facilitate the design of boarding where an opportunity offered.

 Enemy's Line of Battle.

The enemy appeared with their heads to the northward, and formed their line of battle with great closeness and correctness; and, as Nelson's mode of attack was unusual, so the structure of their line was new. It formed a crescent convexing to leeward; and Collingwood, in leading down the centre, had both the van and rear of the enemy abaft his beam. In a private letter from an officer of the *Bellerophon*, he observes, "The enemy formed a close and well imagined, though until now unexampled, order of battle; and which, had their plan of defence been as well executed as it was contrived, would have rendered our victory much more dearly bought than it was; they were formed in a double line, thus—

1 2 3
 4 5 6

French and Spaniards alternately, and it was their intention on our breaking the line (which manœuvre they expected we should as usual put in execution) astern of No. 4, for No. 2 to make sail, that the British ship in hauling up should fall on board of her, while No. 5 should bear up and rake her, and No. 1 would bring her broadside to bear on her starboard bow. Luckily, this manœuvre succeeded with only the *Tonnant* and *Bellerophon*, which were among the ships that suffered most." Before their fire opened, every ship was therefore about a cable's length to windward of her second ahead and astern, forming a kind of double line, and appeared, when on their beam, to leave a very small interval between them, and this without crowding their ships. *Vileneuve*, in the *Bucentaure*, was in the centre, and the *Prince of Asturias*, bearing the Spanish admiral *Gravina's* flag, in the rear; but the French and Spanish ships were intermixed without any apparent regard to national order. Nelson, in the *Victory*,

Nelson in the Victory leads the Weather Column.

bore down at the head of the weather column, and Collingwood, in the Royal Sovereign, at the head of the lee.

About ten o'clock, Nelson began to manifest great anxiety to close with the enemy. He frequently remarked that they put a good face upon it, but always quickly added: "I'll give them such a dressing as they never had before," regretting, at the same time, the vicinity of the land. At that critical moment, Captain Blackwood ventured to represent to his lordship the value of such a life as his, and particularly on the present occasion; and proposed that he should hoist his flag in the *Euryalus*, from which he could better see what was going on, as well as what orders to issue in case of necessity. He would not listen to such a proposal, and assigned as his reason the force of example. The captain then endeavoured to persuade him to allow the *Temeraire*, *Neptune*, and *Leviathan*, to lead into action before the *Victory*, which was then the headmost ship. After much conversation, in which Blackwood gave it as the joint opinion of Captain Hardy and himself that it would be most advantageous to the fleet for his lordship to keep out of the battle as long as possible, he at length consented that the *Temeraire*, which was then sailing abreast of the *Victory*, should go ahead, and hailed Captain Harvey to say that such was his intention, if the *Temeraire* could pass the *Victory*. Captain Harvey, being rather out of hail, the admiral sent Blackwood to communicate his wishes, and that officer, on his return, found him doing all in his power to increase rather than diminish sail, so that the *Temeraire* was actually unable to pass: consequently, when they came within gun-shot of the enemy, Captain Harvey, finding his efforts ineffectual, was obliged to take his station astern of the admiral.

Villeneuve, on seeing the novel mode of attack

Advance of the British Fleet.

intended to be made on the combined fleet, and which he could not in any way prevent, called his officers about him, and, pointing out the manner in which the British commanders were leading their columns, he exclaimed, "Nothing but victory can attend such gallant conduct!" When Nelson observed the enemy's shot pass over the *Victory*, he desired Captain Blackwood, and Captain Prowse, of the *Sirius*, to go on board their frigates, and in their way, to tell all the captains of line of battle ships that he depended on their exertions; and that if, from the mode of attack prescribed, they found it impracticable to get into action immediately, they might adopt whatever course they thought best, provided it carried them quickly and closely alongside the enemy. At parting, Captain Blackwood took his hand and said, "I trust, my lord, that on my return to the *Victory*, which will be as soon as possible, I shall find your lordship well and in possession of twenty prizes." "God bless you, Blackwood!" he replied; "I shall never speak to you again."

The two columns of the British fleet, led on by their gallant chiefs, continued to advance, with light airs and all sails set, towards the van and centre of the enemy, whose line extended about north-north-east and south-south-west. In order to prevent any possibility of their escape into Cadiz, Nelson's column was steered about two points more to the north than Collingwood's, in consequence of which the leading ships of the lee line were the first engaged. The *Royal Sovereign* and her line steered for the centre. At half-past eleven the enemy began firing on the *Royal Sovereign*. "See," exclaimed Nelson, "how that noble fellow, Collingwood, carries his ship into action." Ten minutes afterwards, the *Royal Sovereign* opened her fire, and cut through the enemy's line astern of the Spanish ship, *Santa Anna*, 112, engag-

Collingwood and Captain Rotherham.

ing her at the muzzle of her guns on the starboard side. Collingwood, delighted at having got first into action, turned to his captain and said, "Rotherham, what would Nelson give to be here?" "Perhaps," says Southey, "both these brave officers thought of Nelson with gratitude, for a circumstance which had occurred on the preceding day. Collingwood, with some of the captains, having gone on board the *Victory*, to receive instructions, Nelson inquired of him where his captain was, and was told in reply that they were not upon good terms with each other. 'Terms!' said Nelson—'good terms with each other!' He immediately sent a boat for Captain Rotherham, led him, as soon as he arrived, to Collingwood, and, saying, 'Look, yonder are the enemy!' bade them shake hands like Englishmen."—Rotherham, during the engagement, displayed a congenial spirit with that of Nelson himself. A heavy shower of musketry had nearly swept the quarter-deck of the *Royal Sovereign*, when some of his officers earnestly requested him not to expose himself so much to the enemy's sharpshooters, by wearing a gold-laced hat and appearing in his epanettes. "Let me alone," replied Rotherham; "I have always fought in a cocked hat, and I always will." The other ships of the lee line vied with each other in following the daring example of their leader.

The weather column, led on by Nelson, had meanwhile advanced towards the enemy's van, and by his orders flags had been hoisted on different parts of the rigging of the *Victory*, lest a shot should carry away her ensign. It is an extraordinary fact that the enemy did not hoist any colours, at least, not till late in the action. The *Santissima Trinidad* and *Bucentaure* were the ninth and tenth ships of their line; but, as the enemy's admirals did not show their flags, the former was distinguished from the rest only by hav-

The Victory attacks the Santissima Trinidad.

ing four decks; and to the bow of this formidable opponent, his old acquaintance, as Nelson familiarly called her, he ordered the Victory to be steered.* The enemy at first displayed considerable coolness; and, as the Victory approached, such of their ships as were ahead of her and across her bows, began, at fifty minutes past eleven, frequently to fire single guns, to ascertain whether she was within range, when, a shot having passed through her main-top-gallant sail, they opened a tremendous fire. The steadiness preserved by his crew was noticed with great satisfaction by Nelson, who declared that in all his battles he had seen nothing which surpassed it. The Victory had about 20 men killed and 30 wounded, before she returned a shot. Her mizen-topmast and all her studding sails and their booms on both sides had been shot away, and the wheel knocked to pieces, so that they were compelled to steer by relieving tackles in the gun-room. The Victory was then about 500 yards from the Bucentaure, having the latter about two points on the larboard bow—the Redoubtable on the starboard bow, and the French Neptune right ahead—the Santissima Trinidad having forged ahead so as to lie rather broad on the starboard bow of the Bucentaure. In two or three minutes after the mizen topmast had come down, a double-headed shot swept the Victory's poop, killed eight marines, and wounded several others. This was immediately observed by Nelson, who directed Captain Adair to send his men to the great guns;

* Nelson was particularly anxious to get alongside M. Villeneuve, and frequently employed his remaining eye in endeavouring to discover the flag of the commander-in-chief. His old antagonist, the Santissima Trinidad, was well known by her four tier of ports, but Nelson had no real intention of a continued attack upon her, whilst a French vice-admiral was to be contended with.—THE OLD SAILOR.

Proceedings on board the Victory.

but to be prompt at call. Shortly afterwards a shot passed through the thickness of four hammocks near the larboard chess-tree, struck the quarter of the launch, shivered the fore brace bits, and then went away between the admiral and Captain Hardy. A splinter, from the bits, bruised the left foot of the latter, and tore the buckle away from his shoe. The gallant chief and his brave captain, who had been walking together, instantly stopped and gazed with much earnestness at each other, under the supposition that one of them was wounded; but, on perceiving that both were safe, his lordship smilingly observed, "This work is too warm, Hardy, to last long."

In about a minute afterwards, a partial clearance of the smoke afforded the Victory an opportunity to perceive the position of the enemy as above stated, and Captain Hardy, seeing the impossibility of breaking through the line without running on board one of the ships, mentioned the circumstance to Nelson, who quickly answered, "It cannot be helped; it does not signify which we run on board of—take your own choice." About 1*, P.M., the Victory's bow was passing the stern of the Bucentaure so close that, had there been wind enough to blow out the ensign of the latter, it might have been torn away from its staff by the people on board the Victory. At this moment the 68-pounder fore-castle carronade of the Victory, loaded with one round shot, and a keg containing 500 musket balls, was discharged

* Historians differ very much with respect to the time at which the Victory actually commenced the action. A shot or two had been fired soon after twelve o'clock; but it is conjectured more from accident than design. The two persons appointed to take minutes were killed soon after the enemy opened their fire, and, therefore, the precise moment cannot be ascertained, but it was certainly near one o'clock.
— THE OLD SAILOR.

Proceedings on board the *Victory*.

point blank into the cabin windows of the *Bucentaure*, and did most dreadful execution, which was promptly followed up by the tremendous broadside of the *Victory*, as the guns in succession were brought to bear upon her opponent, and the crash caused by the charge of double, and, in several instances, treble shot, must have been most appalling to the enemy—the distance between the ships being so small that the *Victory*'s larboard main-yard arm, as she rolled, touched the vangs of the *Bucentaure*'s gaff. The three-decker was between two and three minutes passing the French admiral's stern; but even in that time the loss of the latter, from the *Victory*'s fire, in killed and wounded, is admitted to have been nearly 400 men, and 20 of their guns dismounted.

Nelson and Captain Hardy were pacing the deck, and the former listened with anxiety to the almost deafening noise of the guns, and the rending and crashing of the *Bucentaure*'s frame-work; but the moment the *Victory* became a fair object to the French *Neptune*, that ship opened a heavy fire upon her, making almost every shot tell, whilst, at the same time, the *Redoubtable* brought her foremost guns to bear, so as to aid in raking the *Victory*. It appeared doubtful, at first, which ship the *Victory* would take, but the French *Neptune*, having set her jib and gathered way, ranged ahead, and the helm of the *Victory* was clapped hard a-port and she stood for the *Redoubtable*. The two ships were soon in collision,*

* Huggins, the marine painter to his majesty, has recently exhibited in Exeter Hall two most admirable paintings of the Battle of Trafalgar; in one of which he has chosen the moment when the collision between the *Victory* and *Redoubtable* took place, and in the other the gale after the battle. Turner has also a picture in the Painted Hall, Greenwich, but it is more a portrait of the *Victory* than any thing else. — THE OLD SAILOR.

Proceedings on board the *Victory*.

and the *Redoubtable*, just previous to coming in contact, shut her lower deck ports and fired from them no more during the battle. In a few minutes the ships dropped alongside of each other: the starboard fore lower studding-sail boom-iron of the *Victory* hooking into the leech of her opponent's foretopsail, and keeping them together. At this moment the starboard 68-pounder carronade on the *Victory's* forecastle, loaded with a similar charge to that already described, was fired with deadly effect, and in an instant cleared the gangways of the French 74, who continued to fight her main-deck guns, and to pour in constant discharges of musketry from her tops.

Meanwhile the remaining ships of Nelson's column pressed forward to his support without regard to their stations in the line. Hence it was that the Spaniards, watching from the walls of Cadiz the progress of the British columns, described them as coming down "like mad Englishmen in confusion and disorder;" little imagining that their movements were the result of profound thought and consummate judgment. Owing to the mode of attack which the admiral had adopted, the fastest sailers, like sharpshooters in an army, had half joined the battle before the slow-sailing ships came up to their support, as a corps of reserve, which soon decided the day. Had he delayed forming his line, and proportioned the way made by the bad sailing ships of the fleet, they would have fired at a distance for a considerable time, and the enemy might have had a drawn battle by escaping into Cadiz. What the genius of Nelson so ably planned, his officers fully executed.

In the first heat of the action, Mr. Scott, the admiral's secretary, was killed by a cannon-ball, while conversing with Captain Hardy very near to Lord Nelson. Captain Adair, of the marines, endeavoured

Nelson is mortally wounded.

to remove the mangled body, but it had already attracted the notice of the admiral. "Is that poor Scott who is gone?" he inquired. Mr. Pascoe, his first lieutenant, received a severe wound when speaking to his lordship.

The fire from the tops of the Redoubtable took a most decided and fatal effect amongst the officers and men on the deck of the Victory: and Hardy, sensible that the admiral's dress made him too conspicuous a mark for this murderous kind of warfare, intreated him to change it, or at least to throw a great coat over it. Nelson merely replied that he had not time to do so. As the great guns of his opponent were silent, he twice gave orders to cease firing upon her, under the impression that she had struck. About 25 minutes past one, Nelson and Hardy were walking near the middle of the quarter-deck; the admiral had just commended the manner in which one of his ships near him was fought; and he was in the act of turning near the combings of the cabin ladder hatchway, with his face towards the stern, when a musket-ball, fired from the mizen-top of the Redoubtable, struck him on the left shoulder, and, perforating the epaulet, passed through the spine, and lodged in the muscles of the back towards the right side. Nelson instantly fell with his face on the deck, upon the very spot which was covered with the blood of his secretary. Hardy, on turning round, saw the admiral falling, and immediately afterwards Sergeant Secker of the marines and two seamen raised him from the deck. "Hardy," said he, "I believe they have done it at last!" "I hope not," said the captain. "Yes," he replied, "my back-bone is shot through."

The men immediately bore off the wounded admiral to the cock-pit, and, while they were descending the ladder from the middle deck, he covered his face and his stars with his handkerchief, that he might

Nelson's last moments.

not attract the notice of the crew.* At the foot of the cockpit ladder he was met by Mr. Burke, the parser, who, with the assistance of a marine, supporting his legs, carried him over the bodies of the wounded and dying, with which the cock-pit was crowded, and placed him on a pallet, on the larboard side of the midshipmen's birth. Mr. Beatty, surgeon of the Victory, was summoned, and the admiral's clothes were taken off to facilitate the examination of the wound. Nelson knew from his own feelings, as well as from the expression of the surgeon's countenance, which he closely watched, that it was mortal. "You can be of no use to me, Beatty," said he; "go and attend those whose lives can be preserved." The Rev. Mr. Scott, Nelson's chaplain and foreign interpreter, (whom he always called Doctor, probably to distinguish him from his private secretary of the same name) having at this moment gone to the cockpit to look after his wounded friend, Lieutenant Pascoe, perceived, with amazement and horror, that the admiral had been brought down. He immediately seated himself on the floor, supported his pillow during the surgeon's operations, and continued in attendance on him to the last. After some inquiries relative to the state of the battle, about which he manifested much greater concern than for his personal situation, though evidently suffering extreme agony, he suddenly exclaimed, in a hurried manner, "Doctor, remember me to Lady

* Some of Nelson's biographers have stated that on descending the ladder he observed the tiller ropes, which had been shot away, had not been replaced, and gave orders that new ones should be rove. This must be an error; Nelson was a thorough seaman, and knew that the tiller ropes were useless when the wheel was knocked to pieces — the ship was being steered at the time by the relieving tackles.
— THE OLD SAILOR.

Nelson's last moments.

Hamilton: remember me to Horatia. Tell her I have made a will, and left her a legacy to my country." This he afterwards repeated in a calmer tone to Mr. Scott, with whom he conversed at intervals, in a low voice, but in a perfectly collected manner. As the blood flowed internally from the wound, the lower cavity of the body gradually filled, and at times produced a feeling of suffocation: he therefore frequently desired Mr. Burke to raise him; and, complaining of excessive thirst, he was supplied with lemonade by Mr. Scott. In this state of suffering, however, with nothing but havoc, death, and misery around him, the spirit of Nelson remained unsubdued. His mind was still intent on the great object that he had always kept in view—his duty to his country; and he anxiously inquired for Captain Hardy, that he might learn from his lips whether his hopes of the annihilation of the enemy were likely to be realised. At this critical period of the battle, it was upwards of an hour before that officer could leave the deck, and Nelson began to be apprehensive that his brave associate had fallen.

During this time the fight raged with great fury, and soon after the fall of Nelson both ships fell on board the *Temeraire*, the *Redoubtable's* bowsprit passing over the gangway of the British ship, a little afore the main shrouds, where it was immediately lashed, and a most effective raking fire poured into the devoted Frenchman. The destruction from the tops of the *Redoubtable* had nearly cleared the upper deck of the *Victory*, which being observed from the *Redoubtable's* mizen-top, was communicated to the officers of that ship, and the boarders mustered on her gangway and in the chains to board the *Victory*. The curvature in the upper part of the hulls prevented this; but a party of officers and men from the *Victory's* middle and main-deck instantly ascended to

Nelson's last moments.

repel the meditated attack, and an interchange of musketry took place, in which Captain Adair, of the marines, and 18 men were killed, one lieutenant mortally wounded, and 1 midshipman and 20 men wounded. The grinding of the dead bodies between the two ships as they fell is described as horrible.

But to return to Nelson, who lay expiring in the cock-pit. The crew of the Victory were heard cheering: Nelson anxiously inquired the cause, when Lieutenant Pascoe, who lay wounded near him, said that one of their opponents had struck. A gleam of joy lighted up the countenance of the dying admiral, and, whenever the cheers were repeated and marked the progress of his victory, his satisfaction visibly increased, and with it his impatience to see Hardy. "Will no one bring Hardy to me?" he at length exclaimed. "He must be killed; I am certain he is dead." Mr. Scott then went to call him. Presently, Mr. Bulkley, the captain's aide-de-camp, came below, and in a low tone communicated to the surgeon the particular circumstances respecting the fleet which had detained Captain Hardy, who, he said, would take the first opportunity that offered to leave the deck. The excessive heat of the cockpit, from the number of the dead and wounded, increased the admiral's faintness, and his sight became dim. "Who brought the message?" he asked feebly. Burke replied that it was Bulkley. "It is his voice," said Nelson; "remember me, Bulkley, to your father." Soon afterwards, Captain Hardy came down from the deck, and anxiously strove to conceal the feelings with which he had been struggling. "How goes the day with us, Hardy?" was the admiral's first question. "Ten ships have struck," replied Hardy. "But none of our's, I hope?" rejoined the admiral. "There is no fear of that, my dear lord," said the captain. "Five of their van have

Nelson's last moments.

tacked, and show an intention of bearing down upon us; but I have called some of our fresh ships round the Victory, and have no doubt of your complete success." It was not till then that Nelson adverted to his own situation. "I am a dead man, Hardy," said he: "I am going fast; it will soon be all over with me. Come nearer. Let my dear Lady Hamilton have my hair and all other things belonging to me." Hardy expressed a hope that the surgeon could yet hold out some prospect of life. "Oh no! it is impossible," he replied; "Beatty will tell you so. My back is shot through." Hardy found himself unable any longer to suppress the emotions of his affectionate heart, shook hands with him once more, and hurried away for a time to conceal the poignancy of his sorrow.

The firing continued, and the cheers of the men were occasionally heard amidst the repeated peals. With a wish to support the spirits of the admiral, agitated by this brief interview with the friend whom he so sincerely regarded, and suffering under increased pain, aggravated by excessive thirst and great difficulty of respiration, Burke observed, "I still hope, my lord, that you will carry home this glorious news." "Don't talk nonsense," replied Nelson; "one would indeed like to live a little longer, but I know it to be impossible. God's will be done! I have performed my duty, and I devoutly thank him for it." A wounded seaman was lying near him on a pallet, waiting for amputation, and in the bustle that prevailed was hurt by some person passing by. Nelson, weak as he was, indignantly turned his head, and with his usual authority reprimanded the man for not having more humanity. Soon afterwards, he was again visited by the surgeon. By this time he had lost all feeling in the lower part of the body. He made the surgeon ascertain this, and said, "You

Nelson's last moments.

know I am gone; I know it. I feel something in my breast," laying his hand on his left side, "which tells me so." When Beatty inquired if he was in great pain, he replied, it was so great that he wished he was dead; "yet," he repeated in a lower tone, "one would like to live a little longer too;" and in a few minutes he added, in the same under-tone: "What would become of poor Lady Hamilton, if she knew my situation?"

Hardy had been absent about fifty minutes; the firing from the *Victory* had almost ceased, and the glorious result of the day was accomplished, when he returned and congratulated his dying friend and commander on the complete victory which he had gained. He said that he could not tell the precise number of the enemy that had struck, as it was impossible to see them distinctly; but fourteen or fifteen at least. "God be praised!" replied Nelson—"but I bargained for twenty." He then desired him to bring the fleet to an anchor. Hardy hinted, with all possible delicacy, that the command would devolve on Admiral Collingwood. Nelson, impressed with the importance of the fleet being brought to anchor, and with the ruling passion of his soul predominant in death, replied somewhat warmly, "Not whilst I live, I hope, Hardy;" and, vainly endeavouring to raise himself on the pallet, "Do you," said he, "bring the fleet to anchor." The captain was retiring to fulfil this injunction, when the admiral called him back and desired him to come near to him. "Don't throw me overboard," said he, in a low voice, desiring that his body might be carried home to be buried beside the remains of his father and mother, unless the king should be pleased to order otherwise. Then, reverting to the objects of his fondest solicitude, "Take care, Hardy," said he, "of my dear Lady Hamilton!—take care of poor Lady Hamilton! As if to take

Death of Nelson.

a last farewell of a friend in whose welfare he had for many years deeply interested himself, he desired Hardy to kiss him. The captain knelt down, and kissed his cheek. "Now I am satisfied," he exclaimed. "Thank God, I have done my duty!" Hardy stood over him for a few moments in silent agony; then, before he withdrew, kneeling once more, he kissed his forehead. "Who is that?" he asked, and being answered by Hardy that it was he, "God bless you, Hardy!" he feebly ejaculated.

He now desired to be turned on his right side, saying, "I wish I had not left the deck; I shall soon be gone." Addressing his chaplain, he said: "Doctor, I have not been a great sinner." Mr. Scott was too much affected to answer immediately. "I have not been a great sinner --- have I?" he again eagerly interrogated. A paroxysm of pain now suddenly seizing him, he exclaimed, in a loud and solemnly impressive voice, "Thank God, I have done my duty!" These words, which he repeated, were the last that he uttered. He turned his face towards Mr. Burke, on whose arm he had been supported; and, at half-past four o'clock, three hours and a quarter after receiving his wound, he expired, apparently without pain, as if sinking into a quiet sleep.

For about fifteen minutes after Nelson was wounded, a spirited and continued fire was kept up from the starboard guns of the Victory on the Redoubtable; and, during that short time, more than forty officers and men in the former were killed or wounded by the musketry alone in the tops of her antagonist. The practice of placing men with small arms in the tops was one which Nelson highly disapproved, and which he would not allow in the Victory, on account of the danger of setting fire to the sails. It was from the mizen-top of the Redoubtable that the fatal shot had been aimed; but with such success was the

The Redoubtable strikes to the Victory.

fire from that quarter returned from the deck of the Victory, that it was not long before two Frenchmen only were left alive there. One of these was recognised by an old quarter-master as the man who wounded the admiral, from his wearing a white frock and a glazed cocked hat. This quarter-master and two young midshipmen, named Collingwood and Pollard, were now the only persons left on the poop of the Victory. The midshipmen kept firing at the enemy's top, and the quarter-master supplied them with cartridges. One of the Frenchmen, attempting to escape down the rigging, was shot by Mr. Pollard, and fell dead on the poop. His companion came forward to fire again. "That's he!" cried the quarter-master, pointing to him, and at the same moment received a shot in his mouth which killed him on the spot. The midshipmen fired together, and their antagonist dropped. After the surrender of the ship, he was found dead in the top, one ball having pierced his head and the other his breast. Before the Redoubtable struck her colours, she had been twice on fire, in her fore-chains and on the fore-castle; and, by throwing combustibles into the Victory, her crew had set fire to that ship also. The alarm given on the occasion reached to the cockpit. It produced, however, no trepidation, no hurry; and the British seamen, having put out the flames on board their own ship, immediately turned their attention to the Redoubtable, and rendered her all the assistance in their power. Such was their hardihood that, when their foe struck, and it was found impracticable to board her, because, though both ships touched, yet their upper works fell in so much that there was a great space between their gangways; and she could not be entered from the middle or lower decks, as all her ports were closed; some of the men volunteered to jump overboard and swim under the bows of the

The Temeraire.

Redoubtable to secure the prize, but Captain Hardy thought the lives of such men too valuable to be risked in so desperate an attempt.

About the time that the *Victory* was booming herself off from the *Redoubtable*, it was discovered that the *Fougueux* was lying alongside the *Temeraire*, so that four ships were now foul of each other, but the *Victory* shortly afterwards got clear, and stood on.

The fall of the British admiral, being observed on board her colossal opponent, the *Santissima Trinidad*, was hailed by a shout of joy from her crew. Short, however, was their exultation. The larboard guns of the *Victory* were plied with such effect upon this four-decker, that many of her men, to escape certain destruction, leaped out of her and swam to the *Victory*, whose people actually assisted them to mount her sides during the action. After subduing this enormous antagonist, the *Victory* passed on to a third ship, the submission of which closed the engagement with her.

Both the French and Spaniards fought desperately. The former, indeed, seemed desirous of clearing themselves from the imputation thrown upon them by the latter, after the action with Sir Robert Calder: and never was the unconquerable spirit of British seamen so conspicuously displayed. Many of our ships had two or more of the enemy upon them at a time. The *Temeraire*, whose station was astern of the *Victory*, was boarded by two ships at once. The enemy poured in great numbers upon her quarter-deck, rushed to the flag-staff, and tore down the colours. The British tars were in the highest degree enraged; they immediately turned-to, cleared the deck of the assailants, most of whom were killed and the rest forced overboard, re-hoisted the colours amidst loud cheers, and soon forced their two opponents to strike

The Britannia — Neptune — Leviathan — Royal Sovereign.

their's. It was remarked, as a circumstance unprecedented in naval combats, that, after the gallant crew of the *Temeraire* had carried these two ships, they turned the enemy's guns to good account during the remainder of the action.

In the *Earl of Northesk*, the commander-in-chief found a worthy second, and a gallant emulator of his great example. The *Britannia*, "Old Ironsides," as the brave tars emphatically called her, certainly did no discredit to the glorious name she bore. She broke through the enemy's line, astern of their fourteenth ship, pouring in on each side a most destructive fire, which, in a few minutes, totally dismasted a French 80-gun ship, from which a white handkerchief was waved in token of submission. Leaving her to be picked up by the frigates, the *Britannia* passed on to others of the enemy, and continued engaging, frequently on both sides, and with two or three at a time, with very little intermission, for upwards of four hours.

Captain Fremantle, in the *Neptune*, had two Spanish ships, of the same force, to contend with; and, in consequence of the calm which prevailed, brought his broadsides to bear so effectually, as to carry away all the masts of his opponents. Though he himself lost comparatively few men, yet the slaughter on board the enemy's ships, when they struck, was truly dreadful.

The *Leviathan*, Captain Bayntun, after assisting in disabling the *Bucentaure*, the French admiral's ship, and the *Santissima Trinidad*, passed on to the *San Augustino*, one of seven which appeared to be coming to surround her. She was silenced in a quarter of an hour; and the gallant crew of the *Leviathan*, making her fast with a hawser, towed her off with the English jack flying.

The *Royal Sovereign*, bearing the flag of Admiral

The Belleisle — Bellerophon.

Collingwood, was in action twenty minutes before any other ship. Her opponent was the *Santa Anna*, bearing the flag of the Spanish admiral Aliva. During the conflict which ensued, the *Royal Sovereign* was dismasted, and the *Euryalus* was sent to her assistance. "My little ship," cried her crew, hailing the *Euryalus*, as she came up, "heave our head round, that our broadside may bear, and we shall soon be at the sally-port." The *Euryalus* accordingly hove her head round; and she poured into the *Santa Anna* such a discharge, as crushed her side in. The *Spaniard* struck, soon afterwards, to the Tonnant.

The *Belleisle* was totally dismasted within an hour after the commencement of the action; but Captain Hargood, by the dextrous use of his sweeps, brought his broadside to bear upon two opponents, so as to maintain an effective fire upon them during the remainder of the engagement.

The *Bellerophon* contributed an ample share to the glorious result of the day. After passing through the enemy's line, she was fallen foul of by the French ship *L'Aigle*, her fore-yard locking with the main-yard of the latter. At the same time that she engaged this ship on her starboard bow, and *El Monarca* on her larboard, she received and returned the fire of another *Spaniard*, *Bahama*, on the larboard quarter, of the *San Juan Nepumoceno*, athwart her stern, and of the French *Swiftsure*, on the starboard quarter. Her quarter-deck, poop, and fore-castle, were nearly cleared by the enemy's musketry, chiefly from troops on board *l'Aigle*. Whilst the *Bellerophon* was thus engaged with these five ships, *l'Aigle* twice attempted to board her, and threw several grenades into the lower deck, which burst, and dreadfully wounded several of the crew. She likewise set fire to the fore-chains. So well served were the guns of the *Bellerophon*, that the enemy were

The Enemy's Line gives way.

soon driven from the lower deck of l'Aigle; after which, our men took out the quoins, and elevated the guns, so as to tear her deck and sides to pieces. On getting clear, she dropped astern, without returning a shot; whilst, raked by her antagonist, her star-board quarter was entirely beaten in, and the slaughter on board was prodigious, so that she fell an easy conquest to the *Defiance*, a fresh ship. About three o'clock, her first opponent, *El Monarca*, struck to the *Bellerophon*.

It is impossible to particularize every individual act of gallantry performed in this hard-fought conflict. Some notion of the determination to conquer, which the British commanders carried with them into the action, may be formed from the fact, that five of them engaged so closely, that the muzzles of their lower deck guns touched those of the enemy. In every instance where this occurred, their antagonists immediately lowered their ports, and deserted their guns on that deck; whilst the British seamen, on the contrary, were deliberately loading their guns with two, and often three, round-shot, which made dreadful havoc. Indeed, many of our officers and seamen afterwards declared, that they were astonished to see so powerful a fleet destroyed in so short time; and that the masts and rigging fell over the sides of the enemy's ships with such rapidity, that it appeared to be more the effect of machinery than any thing that could have been produced by the effect of a cannonade in an engagement.

About three o'clock, many of the enemy's ships having struck their colours, their line gave way. Admiral Gravina, with ten ships, joining their frigates to leeward, stood towards Cadiz. The five headmost ships of their van tacked, and, standing to the southward, to windward of the British line, were engaged, and the sternmost of them intercepted and

Loss of the Combined Fleet.

taken by the *Minotaur*. The four others, *Formidable*, 80, *Mont Blanc*, *Scipion*, and *Duguay Trouin*, of 74 guns each, all French, were led on by rear-admiral *Dumanoir* to the perpetration of an act of cowardice and barbarity, which would have disgraced the most savage nation. They had taken no part in the action; and now, in their flight, as they passed, they not only poured their fire into the disabled British ships, but also into the Spanish prizes; and they were observed to back their top-sails, in order that they might fire with the greater precision. But it was not long that these savages were permitted to felicitate themselves on their escape. Sir Richard *Strachan*, who had under his command the same number of ships, and of exactly the same force, fell in with the fugitives, while cruising before *Ferrol*, in hopes of intercepting the *Rochfort* squadron, on the night of the 3^d of November: The next day, at noon, he brought them to action, and, after an obstinate engagement of three hours and a half, compelled the whole of them to strike. Thus, out of a formidable fleet of 33 sail of the line, which sailed from *Cadiz* on the 20th of October, only ten remained to the enemy that were not taken or destroyed, and six of these were wrecks.

Nelson had lived long enough to enjoy the inexpressible satisfaction of learning the completion of the victory which he had so gloriously begun. The last guns were discharged at the flying foe at the moment when he expired. Twenty sail of the line, the exact number he had "bargained for," struck to the conquerors; but the escape of one of them into *Cadiz* reduced the number of the trophies to nineteen. Among these were the *Santissima Trinidad*, with rear-admiral *Cisneros*, and the *Bucentaure*, with *Villeneuve*, the commander-in-chief himself. The slaughter on board many of these ships was prodigious.

Violent Gale.

gious. Some of them had upwards of 400 killed and wounded; nay, on board the *Bucentaure*, the number is said to have fallen little short of 600. But this success was not won without a heavy loss on the part of the British, of whom 423 were killed, and 1064 wounded. Besides the commander-in-chief, two excellent officers fell in the action—Captain Duff, of the *Mars*, and Captain Cooke, of the *Bellerophon*.

Owing to a violent gale, which came on from the south-west immediately after the action, only four prizes could be preserved with the greatest exertions, and these were sent to Gibraltar. Nine were driven on shore, and wrecked; four, including the *Santissima Trinidad*, were destroyed, after the prisoners had been removed; one foundered; and the *Achille*, by some mismanagement of her crew, took fire, after her surrender, and blew up. These distressing circumstances afforded Nelson's brave followers more than abundant occasion to realize, to its fullest extent, that prayer which he had preferred to his God on going into battle, that humanity, after victory, might be a predominant feature in the British fleet. Never was more generous humanity displayed towards a fallen enemy. Indeed, upwards of one hundred of our gallant seamen perished during the storm which succeeded the action, in their efforts to save the prisoners out of the different prizes.

The resentment of the Spaniards against their French allies for the barbarous treatment they had received from the latter is not to be expressed. It was strikingly displayed when, two days after the engagement, seven of the ships which had escaped into Cadiz ventured out in the hope of picking up some of the disabled prizes. On this occasion, as Southey relates, "the prisoners in the *Argonauta* in a body offered their services to the British prize-

Generosity of the Spaniards.

master, to man the guns against any of the French ships, saying that, if a Spanish ship came alongside, they would go quietly below; but requesting that they might be allowed to fight the French in resentment for the murderous usage which they had suffered at their hands. Such was their earnestness, and such the implicit confidence that could be placed in Spanish honour, that the offer was accepted, and they were actually stationed at the lower deck guns." Upwards of 3000 Spanish prisoners were sent ashore on condition that they should not serve again until regularly exchanged; and the governor-general of Andalusia, with a laudable feeling of gratitude to a generous enemy, offered to receive our wounded into their hospitals, and pledged the honour of Spain that the utmost attention should be paid to them. The British seamen who were cast upon their coast were also treated in the noblest manner by the Spaniards. They declared that they should not "consider any of the brave English as prisoners of war, who had already suffered so severely from the violence of the storm." Every exertion was made to save their lives during the tempest, and the Spanish soldiers gave up their beds to accommodate the shipwrecked British seamen. "Though," said they, "Nelson has been the ruin of the Spanish navy, yet we sincerely lament his fall. He was the most generous enemy and the greatest commander of his age." Vice-admiral d'Aliva, who had been severely wounded and taken in the *Santa Anna*, which afterwards escaped into Cadiz, was claimed as a prisoner by Admiral Collingwood, who had not removed him into the Royal Sovereign, "because he could not disturb the repose of a man who was supposed to be in his last moments." Villeneuve was sent to England and permitted to return to France; but he died on his way to Paris, not without strong suspicion of foul

Lamentations for Nelson's Death.

play on the part of the French government, which alleged that he had destroyed himself from apprehension of the consequences of a court-martial. The official paper of that government also stated that the battle of Trafalgar lasted three days and three nights, that several ships of both fleets were destroyed, and that the remainder of the combined squadron stood to sea to repair their damages.

Never was a day of victory turned into a day of such profound sorrow and mourning as that which witnessed the last triumph and death of Nelson. When the loss of their beloved commander was known throughout the fleet, a general depression prevailed, and the gloom of the violent tempest which so immediately succeeded seemed to correspond with this universal feeling. "Our friend, our father, our commander, is gone! He will never again lead us to victory! Never shall we behold his equal!" Such were the exclamations that burst from many an agonized heart; and there were few of his followers who would not gladly have yielded their own lives to save that of their beloved commander. Even the humblest of them shared this sentiment. A seaman of the *Victory*, who, just before the fatal catastrophe, was suffering the amputation of an arm, observed to the surgeon: "Well, this might be thought a sad misfortune by some men, but I shall be proud of the accident, as it will make me more like our brave commander-in-chief." Before the operation was finished, the sad tidings that Nelson was shot reached the cockpit. The seaman, who had hitherto borne his pain without shrinking, suddenly started from his seat and exclaimed: "Good God! I had rather the shot had taken off my head and spared his precious life!"

On the following day, Admiral Collingwood, on whom the chief command devolved, shifted his flag

Lamentations for Nelson's Death.

into the *Euryalus* frigate, on account of the damage sustained by the Royal Sovereign. After the example of Nelson, he appointed a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God for "having of his great mercy been pleased to crown the actions of his majesty's fleet with success, in giving them a complete victory over their enemies." On the same day he issued a general order, conveying his thanks to the officers and seamen for the valour and skill which they had displayed in the battle, "where every individual appeared a hero, on whom the glory of his country depended." In his public despatches, he paid this feeling tribute to the memory of him, under whose auspices this signal victory had been achieved: "I have not only to lament, in common with the British navy and the British nation, in the fall of the commander-in-chief, the loss of a hero, whose name will be immortal, and his memory ever dear to his country; but my heart is rent with the most poignant grief for the death of a friend, to whom, by many years' intimacy, and a perfect knowledge of the virtues of his mind, which inspired ideas superior to the common race of men, I was bound by the strongest ties of affection; a grief to which even the glorious occasion in which he fell does not bring the consolation which perhaps it ought."

A corresponding sentiment pervaded every bosom, when, on the 6th of November, these despatches reached London. The universal opinion that the triumph, great and glorious as it was, had been dearly purchased, could not be more strongly expressed than in the deep affliction with which the tidings of Nelson's death were received. The victory excited none of those enthusiastic emotions in the public mind which naval successes have, in every former instance, produced. There was not a man who did not think the life of the hero of the Nile,

His Remains sent home in the Victory.

of Copenhagen, and of Trafalgar, too great a price for the destruction of nineteen sail of French and Spanish men of war. No ebullitions of popular transport mingled with the cold demonstrations of public joy that marked this important event. The honest and manly feeling of the people appeared in the manner it ought; they felt an inward satisfaction at the triumph of the favourite arms; they mourned with all the sincerity and poignancy of domestic grief the death of their hero. When the intelligence was transmitted to their majesties at Windsor, tears testified how deeply they were affected, and the king, in the first emotion of his sorrow, exclaimed: "We have lost more than we have gained!" A day of solemn thanksgiving was appointed. Nelson's only surviving brother, the Rev. Dr. William Nelson, was created an earl; the dignity of baron was conferred on Collingwood; and his majesty directed that the remains of the admiral should be buried at the public expence in St. Paul's Cathedral, with all the military and national honours which it was in the power of his grateful country to bestow.

It was at first the intention of his successor to send home the body in the *Euryalus* frigate; but the crew of the *Victory*, with that affection which their deceased commander never failed to inspire in all around him, expressed the strongest reluctance to part with the precious charge. They remonstrated against its removal through one of the boatswain's mates. The brave tar, with the impressive eloquence of truth and nature, urged a plea that could not be resisted. The noble admiral, he said, had fought with them and fell on their own deck. If, by being put on board a frigate, his remains should fall into the hands of the enemy, their loss would be doubly grievous; and therefore they were resolved, one and all, to carry them in safety to England or to go to the bottom

His Remains sent home in the Victory.

with the corpse. Collingwood, feeling the full force of these representations, acceded to their wishes; and the *Victory*, having been made seaworthy at Gibraltar, sailed for England. After a long and melancholy passage, she arrived on the 2nd of December at Spithead, her colours half-mast high. The recollection how lately she had left that place bearing the flag of that unrivalled commander, whose body she now brought home to his country for burial, rendered her an object of intense interest, that was contemplated with mingled veneration and sorrow. Her shattered and dismantled state bespoke the fury of the conflict in which the hero fell, and her decks were still stained with the blood of his companions. She had received eighty shots between wind and water. Her fore-mast and main-mast had been very badly wounded, and were filled with musket balls: she had a jury mizen-mast, and jury fore and main-top-masts; and numbers of cannon-balls were seen in her bowsprit and bows.

Having been obliged to remain several days at Portsmouth to undergo repairs, the *Victory* sailed, on the 11th of December, from Spithead for the Nore; but, owing to contrary winds, it was the 17th before she could get round the North Foreland. The officers appointed by the Admiralty to receive the body arrived on board, and, as soon as their errand was known, "a general gloom and impressive silence," says Mr. Whidby, master-attendant of Woolwich Dock-yard, who was one of the number, "pervaded the whole ship: never, in my life, had I witnessed any thing so truly affecting; nor did this gloom in the least disperse whilst we remained on board. We found the body in the admiral's cabin; the coffin was opened by the people who attended for that purpose, and the body was placed on a table, with a union-jack before it. It was so well preserved [in

Public Funeral.

spirits], that all who had known Lord Nelson immediately recognised it. All the officers of the Victory, and some of his lordship's friends, attended to take their last farewell. It was afterwards apparelled in some of the late admiral's uniform clothes, and finally laid, bathed with the tears of those who stood around," in the coffin, made from the main-mast of L'Orient, presented to Nelson, in 1799, by Captain Hallowell. This was inclosed in a leaden coffin, which was immediately soldered, and not again opened. The yacht of Captain Grey, commissioner at Sheerness, conveyed the body to Greenwich Hospital, where it was placed in a magnificent outer coffin, and where it lay in state, for three days, in the Painted Hall.* At Greenwich, it was placed in the admiral's own barge, manned by its brave and faithful crew, and deposited, in the afternoon of the 8th of January, in the captains' room at the Admiralty. The funeral took place on the following day. Nearly 10,000 regular troops, consisting chiefly of the regiments which had fought and conquered in Egypt, preceded the hero to his tomb; and the streets, through which the procession passed to St. Paul's, were lined by 20,000 volunteers. The coffin was drawn uncovered, under an elevated canopy, upon a car,† constructed for the occasion, having, in its front and back, a carved representation of the head and stern of the Victory. An object of peculiar interest in this procession—a procession of unexampled pomp and

* This was a most affecting scene, and as several of the crew of the Victory were present added a deeper interest to the spectacle. I well remember it, and the expressions of sorrow from the many thousand spectators were truly heart-felt.—THE OLD SAILOR.

† I much regret that this car, which stood for many years in the Painted Hall, Greenwich, has been broken up.—THE OLD SAILOR.

Nelson's last Will.

pageantry—was the flag of the admiral's ship, which had been perforated, in the battle, by innumerable balls. The seamen of the *Victory*, who bore it, took advantage of the pauses that occurred, to open its ample folds, and show their countrymen what marks of honour it displayed: and when, surrounded by the Prince of Wales and his six royal brothers, the remains of Nelson had been consigned to their last resting-place beneath the centre of the dome of St. Paul's cathedral, and that flag was about to be lowered into the grave, his humble followers, with one accord, tore it in pieces, that each might preserve a fragment of it as long as he lived.

Such was the end of a man, whose example proved the truth of his favourite maxim, that perseverance in the race that is set before us will generally meet with its reward, even in this life. "Without having any inheritance," said he, in concluding a biographical memoir of himself, "I have received all the honours of my profession, been created a peer of Great Britain, &c.; and I may therefore say to the reader, 'Go thou and do likewise.'"

The gratitude of his king and country for his last achievement was not confined to the grant of a monument for himself, and barren honours to his relatives. A pension of £6000 a year was voted by Parliament to his surviving brother, for the maintenance of his dignity; £100,000 for the purchase of an estate, to descend with the title; and £10,000 to each of his sisters.

The testamentary papers of his lordship were proved in Doctors' Commons, on the 23^d of December, 1805, by his brother, Earl Nelson, and William Haslewood, esq. the executors. In his will, dated May 10th, 1803, he directed that, in case of his dying in England, he should be buried in the parish church of Burnham Thorpe, by the side of his deceased father and mother,

Nelson's last Will.

and in as private manner as may be, unless his majesty should signify it to be his pleasure that his body should be interred elsewhere. After specifying some minor bequests to relations and friends, he directed that the residue of his personal estate and effects, with certain exceptions, should be turned into money, and invested in the funds, so as to afford a clear yearly income of £1000 to his wife, in addition to all former provisions made for her, and in addition to the sum of £4000 lately given to her. The estate and dukedom of Bronte he limited in such a manner as to accompany the barony of Nelson; with which limitations the new titles of Earl and Viscount Nelson of Trafalgar and of Merton were made to correspond. The insignia of the various orders with which he was invested were to be transmitted, in the nature of heir-looms, to the successive possessors of the barony and dukedom. To Lady Hamilton he gave his house and furniture at Merton, with 70 acres of the land belonging to it, to revert, after her death, to his lordship's right heirs; and the residuary estate he bequeathed, in equal thirds, to his brother and his two sisters.

To this will were added seven codicils, all, excepting the first, which relates to the bequests to Lady Hamilton, in the hand-writing of Nelson himself. The second gave to his adopted daughter, Horatia Nelson Thompson, the sum of £4000, to be paid six months after his decease, or sooner, if possible; and he left his dearest friend, Emma Lady Hamilton, her sole guardian, till she should attain the age of eighteen years. "This request of guardianship," he says, "I earnestly make to Lady Hamilton, knowing that she will educate my adopted child in the paths of religion and virtue, and give her those accomplishments which so much adorn herself; and, I hope, make her a fit wife for my dear nephew, Horatio Nelson, who I

Conclusion.

wish to marry her, if he should prove worthy, in Lady Hamilton's estimation, of such a treasure as I am sure she will be." In subsequent codicils, he gave to Lady Hamilton* the net yearly sum of £500, to be paid out of the rental of his estate at Bronte; the sum of £2000, and all his hay, at Merton; and he desired that the annual sum of £100 might continue to be paid to the widow of his brother Maurice.

The results of Nelson's last victory were not confined to the destruction of the combined fleet opposed to him. It taught the enemies of Britain a lesson, of which they were duly mindful. Throughout the succeeding nine years of war, not a fleet of their's durst venture to sea; so that all their subsequent attempts on that element were confined to objects of comparatively little importance. But those events are not within the scope of this narrative.

The writer's task is finished. It has been his aim to present, in a small compass, a comprehensive account of the life of the most successful commander that ever wielded the naval thunders of Britain, employing, wherever it was possible, his own words, which give a complete insight into his extraordinary character, and infuse into the narrative the spirit and charm of auto-biography; in short, to offer such a picture of the man and of his achievements, as may contribute to form future NELSONS. Where, indeed, can we look for a brighter pattern! His were not the vain ambition of conquest and power, the sordid

* Lady Hamilton died, in comparative poverty, in an obscure lodging in Calais. I saw her a short time previously to her death at a rustic fête, about four miles from Calais—there were still remains of beauty, but it was tempered by advancing age, and saddened by sorrow. I was near her when she died—she loudly exclaimed against the ingratitude of her country, but her last hours were passed in wild ravings, in which the name of Caraccioli was frequently distinguished.
—THE OLD SAILOR.

Conclusion.

desire of wealth and splendour. DUTY, HONOUR, GLORY, were the principles which stimulated his mighty mind to the accomplishment of prodigies, unmatched in the history of any nation, and which have rendered him a model for his profession in all future ages. Well might King George III., in his reply to the congratulatory address of the City of London on his last achievement, emphatically remark: "His transcendent and heroic services will, I am persuaded, exist for ever in the recollection of my people; and, whilst they tend to stimulate those who come after him to similar exertions, they will prove a lasting source of strength, security, and glory, to my dominions."

THE END.

LONDON:

LEICESTER STREET, LEICESTER SQUARE.



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